Spirit, identity, freedom. An account of how the Spirits agency in Christian metamorphosis is compatible with human freedom and personal identity

Fermer, Richard Malcolm

SPIRIT, IDENTITY, FREEDOM.

An Account of How the Spirit's Agency in Christian *Metamorphosis* is Compatible with Human Freedom and Personal Identity.

Richard M. Fermer

King's College London

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University of London

ABSTRACT.

SPIRIT, IDENTITY, FREEDOM.

The thesis reformulates the traditional grace-freedom debate in terms of the activity of the Spirit, the primary Divine *hypostasis* involved in Christian *metamorphosis* (referring to conversion, regeneration and sanctification), and by employing concepts of freedom and personal identity drawn from Analytic philosophy. The *generating question* concerns the issue of how the work of the Spirit in *metamorphosis* of a person is compatible with human freedom and personal identity? A *Personalist* model is developed, based on an extended analogy between interpersonal human relationships and the Spirit-human relationship. The Personalist model proposed conceives of *metamorphosis* taking place as a result of the personal, affecting presence of the Divine initiative, which challenges a person to respond and enter into personal exchange and reciprocal identification with God. This is preferred to "Non-personal" models, which function as analogical shields protecting the Creator-creature distinction.

The second methodological strategy employed is that of "Systematic contextualisation," which relates the generating question to other *loci* of Christian doctrine, in order to qualify some of the "negative analogies" of the Personalist model. These *loci* include: the doctrine of the image of God and intersubjectivity, general concurrence and providence. A pattern of Divine activity is discerned: a dialectic of relative autonomy and dependence, distinction of identity yet interrelationship. The doctrine of revelation suggests that God's intent of Self-communication is *embedded* within creation from the beginning, shaping its form and pointing to its goal. This Divine purpose is expressed in the covenant, the meaning and basis of creation, and the condition of loving relationship between the Divine and the human. The "negative analogies" are further qualified by considering the discernment of the Spirit. In sum, the "negative analogies" associated with the Personalist model proposed are not vicious. The Personalist model offers the best explanation of the compatibility of human freedom and personal identity.

Acknowledgements.

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Yet, it is to my parents, the source of both individual support and the loving community of nurture, that I am most beholden. Their support is beyond measure.

I dedicate this thesis to Irina Zaveryoukha, with whom idea and reality touched for a moment.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Terms:

LPR	Loving personal human relationships.
LTN	Latent True Nature.

Texts:

NIDNTT	*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*
NIDOTTE	*The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*
NZSTRP	*Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.*

The *MHRA* (Modern Humanities Research Association) method of referencing has been used in this thesis. *MHRA Style Book. Notes for Authors, Editors, and Writes of Theses* (London: W.S. Maney & Sons Ltd., [5th Edition] 1996).

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SPIRIT, IDENTITY AND FREEDOM.

Richard M. Fermer, King's College London.

CHAPTER 1.

SPIRIT, FREEDOM, IDENTITY.

PROLEGOMENA.

> Gregory Samsa woke from uneasy dreams one morning to find himself changed into a giant bug.[1]

Thus begins Kafka's famous short story *Metamorphosis*. What is odd about this altogether surreal story is that Gregory's own reaction to his horrific change of bodily form is incomprehensibly matter of fact. He accepts his new situation as if it were just another assignment handed down to him by the chief clerk, at his anonymous and soulless office. His eventual death is not due to the direct effects of the *metamorphosis* on him, but brought about by the hostile reaction of those around him, for whom the *metamorphosis* is perceived in all its horror as a terrible transformation. The question of how Gregory's *metamorphosis* is reconcilable with his sense of self or personal identity, is not something that Kafka discusses directly. In comparison, the change that underlies Ovid's tales of *Metamorphoses* suits well the Pythagorean theory of change and flux, making one suspicious of outward appearance or form. Yet it is principally employed for dramatic effect, often to deliver the moral of the story.[2]

In both Kafka and Ovid, *metamorphosis* is a dramatic device.[3] In Christianity *metamorphosis* is of an altogether different kind, embodying an ontological claim. This is evident not only in the Transfiguration and Resurrection of Jesus, but also the *metamorphosis* of the Christian believer in their "being formed" in the image of Christ and their movement towards the full state of glory of the eschaton. Christian *metamorphosis*,

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[1] Franz Kafka, *Stories 1904-1924*, trans. by J.A. Underwood (London: MacDonald & Co., 1983), p.91.

[2] For example, in the story of Philemon and Baucis, the *metamorphosis* of the old faithful married couple cedes the moral of the story: "Whom the gods love are gods themselves, and those who have worshiped should be worshiped too." Ovid, *The Metamorphoses*. trans. M.M. Innes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 615-725 [Book III]. Another translation offers this rendering: "*The gods look after Good people still, and cherishers are cherished.*" Trans. by Rolfe Humphries (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1955), p.204. This is one of the stories that does leave open the possibility that the *metamorphosis* is a symbol for a psychological and spiritual change, as Jacob Needleman indicates: "When the ancient wisdom speaks of mortals becoming gods, it is telling us about the birth of a new and higher self, or soul, within ourselves. It is this inner birth that has been served by the marriage of Philemon and Baucis." J. Needleman, *On Love* (London: Arkana, 1996), p.9.

[3] See, for example, Ovid (Innes translation), pp.877-883 [Book VIII]

as we shall see, is not a question of a change of outward appearance or form (*morphe, morphosis*),[4] as in the case of Ovid's and Kafka's description of *metamorphosis*. Christian contentions concerning *metamorphosis* are much more radical: a "new creation";[5] "born again";[6] a "renewal of the mind";[7] a "new heart";[8] a "new spirit";[9] a "new covenant";[10] a "new aeon";[11] a "new song";[12] a "new commandment";[13] and ultimately a "new heaven and earth"[14] and a form of bodily transformation in the eschaton.[15]

What happens to the human person in this radical Christian *metamorphosis*? Does all take place while the believer, as in the case of Kafka's protagonist, sleeps with "uneasy dreams"? Both Kafka and Ovid are little concerned to give realistic accounts of how the events of *metamorphoses* affect the persons involved. This is of little concern as the *metamorphoses* are instrumental to their purpose. In Christianity *metamorphosis* is not instrumental, but intrinsic to Christian soteriological claims. It is the concern of the Christian theologian, therefore, to give a serious account of how Christian *metamorphosis* is effected and how it affects the believer. Some of these concerns were shared by John Oman, who in 1917 wrote his classic *Grace and Personality*. He wished to move away from what he considered to be the dominant conception of grace in the history of theology, namely, grace as "the irresistible might of omnipotence directed in a straight line by omniscience."[16] The traditional view of grace had more to do with a theistic conception of God, than "any notion of God as Father"[17] and squeezed out the "personality" of both God

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[4] See: Georg Braumann, "Form, Substance", in *NIDNTT* Vol.I, ed. Colin Brown (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1975), pp.705-8.
[5] See: II Cor.5.17; Gal.6.15; Eph.2.15; 4.24; Col.3.10.
[6] See: Tit.3.5; John 3.1-8; IPet.1.3, 23; 2.2; Jas.1.18.
[7] See: Rom.12.2, Eph.4.23 (*nous*).
[8] See: Jer.31.31; cf. Ezek.36.26; cf. Col.3.10.
[9] See: Ezek.11.19, 18.31, 36,26; Acts 3.19.
[10] See: Jer.31.31, cf. Ezek.34.25; 37.26.
[11] See: Heb.6.5.
[12] See: Rev.5.9; 14.3.
[13] See: John 13.34, I John 2.8.
[14] See: Isa.65.17; 66.22; II Pet.3.12f; Rev.21.1, 5.
[15] See: I Cor.15.44ff, 51f; Phil.3.21.
[16] J. Oman, *Grace and Personality* (London: Collins, Fontana Library, [1917] 1960) p.37. This way of thinking about grace he considers to be challenged by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries intellectual shattering of the Church's "old infallibilities" and more pressingly, the "great distresses" of human evil and suffering, such as the First World War. In the face of these realities, the old view had to meet the question: "If, then, God can work anywhere with overwhelming fiat, why not everywhere? Can a world, thus easily to be corrected, be evil, and Omnipotence be good and blameless?" ibid., p.39.
[17] ibid., p.24.

and His human creatures.[18] Oman wanted to take the "moral independence" and responsibility of human beings seriously, as well as their "religious dependence" on God. Many of the concerns of Oman's work are to be found in this thesis, however there is a difference in the way that the generating question of my thesis is constructed.

I.) First Prolegomena: Setting up the Generating Question.

This enquiry, as shall be argued in section II.02 below, commences with the identification of a series of claims stemming from Christian revelation and experience, which require explanation and as a result a *generating question* is stimulated.[19] Scientific enquiry, according to Rom Harre, asks the question: "Why is it that the patterns of phenomena are the way they are?"[20] In science the phenomena will be experience of physical reality, or theories of what constitutes physical reality. In theology it will be experience of God and human being's relationship to that God, governed by the event of God's revelation in the person of Christ.[21]

Christian revelation as witnessed to by the Bible and Christian tradition claim that the believer, as a result of Christ's atoning death, will, in relationship to the Spirit, undergo a "new birth", a "renewal", a "new creation". This is what Jesus proclaimed and made possible by His life and death, it is what the disciples paradigmatically experienced at Pentecost, and it is how the apostle Paul experienced the action of the Christian God. Christian Scripture also testifies to the fact that this "new birth" is not the achievement of individual human effort, but accomplished in relationship with the Spirit. As a result of the claims of revelation and Christian experience the *generating question* of my thesis is induced: how is the agency of the Spirit in bringing about Christian *metamorphosis* of the believer compatible with human freedom and personal identity?

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[18] Ibid., p.38.

[19] The term is taken from the philosophy of science. The scientist's curiosity is sparked by a pattern of phenomena, which requires explanation, and leads to the formulation of a *generating question*. See R.M. Harre, *Principles of Scientific Thinking* (London, Macmillan 1970), p.35; David Lamb, *Discovery, Creativity and Problem Solving* (Aldershot, Avebury, 1991), ch.V.

[20] Harre, p.35.

[21] Christoph refers to this as the essential "Christocentricity" of the Christian faith, distinguished from christocentrism as purely the insistence on "the particularity of God's revelation in the historical individual

I.01) Defining the Terms of the Generating Question.

I.0101) *Metamorphosis.*

The term *metamorphosis* is derived from the Greek verb *metamorphoo*,[22] which literally translated means to "change into another form," and in its biblical context is translated by the verbs "transfigure," "transform" and "change."[23] Thus, the verb is used to describe Christ's transfiguration,[24] but for our purposes the key biblical use is that which refers to the change within a person.[25] J. Behm refers to it as, "an invisible process in Christians which takes place, or begins to take place, already during their life in this aeon."[26] In II Corinthians 3.18 the present continuous is used to indicate a process of transformation or change of character, with the end being that of the final degree of glory.[27] David Peterson comments on the use of *metamorphoo* in this passage:

> Transformation is the miracle we *all* experience as a result of seeing the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ... Not just the outward appearance but the essential person is being changed. Linked with the expression 'the same image' (Gk. *ten auten eikona*), this verb indicates that we are changed into the likeness of Christ, who is himself the true image of God. In Christ we see not only the radiance of God's glory but also the true image of humanity. Into that one image we are all being transformed *together*.[28]

In this thesis the term *metamorphosis* will be used as an umbrella term, inspired by, but not limited to the biblical use outlined above, to refer to the transformation or change that is involved in the application of Christian redemption. In traditional Protestant theology

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Jesus Christ who is confessed as the Christ." C. Schwöbel, *God: Action and Revelation* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1992) p.14.

[22] The term is to be distinguished from another biblical word, *metaschematizo* (ICor.4.6; II Cor.11.13, 14, 15; Phil.3.21), which literally means to change the form of a person, and in II Corinthians has the connotation of disguise or "masquerading". Thus, Satan may look like an angel of light, and false teachers may appear sincere. In Phil. 3.21 Paul uses the term to speak of the transformation of our bodies in the future resurrection. It should be clear that in this thesis *metamorphosis* and *metaschematizo* are not being used synonymously.

[23] See, W.E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (London/Edinburgh: Oliphant, 1939).

[24] Mtt.17.2; Mrk.9.2; Lk.9.29. Behm writes of the use of the verb in relation to Jesus' Transfiguration that it is "the anticipation and guarantee of an eschatological reality." *TDNT* Vol.IV, ed. by Gerhard Kittel, trans. by G.W. Bromiley (Stuttgart: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p.758.

[25] For example, Rom.12.2; II Cor.3.18; cf. Gal.4.19: "in travail until Christ be formed [*morphothe*] in you." Braumann makes the following comment on this verse: "It is rather that of coming into the world as a child comes into the world through conception and birth. Christ himself is to be formed in them in the reality of his being"(*NIDNTT*, p.708).

[26] *TDNT* IV, p. 758. This comment may be compared in Chapter 4 with William Alston's conception of the "internality" of the operation of the Spirit.

[27] J. Behm comments on this verse: "To Christians the Spirit has granted free vision of the heavenly glory of the Lord, Christ. In this vision they undergo an unceasing and progressive change into the image of the One whose glory they see. It is the Lord Himself, present and active by the Spirit, who brings about this change." ibid.

conversion and the gift of faith, regeneration and sanctification, and in the East under the category of deification. The thesis will *not* offer an account of the nature of Christian transformation itself; hence it will not present a theology of conversion, regeneration and sanctification, although the thesis may aid in constructing a fully developed doctrine of the application of the work of redemption.

It is important to consider in our future discussion of Christian *metamorphosis* what kind of change is being claimed. Aristotelian-inspired metaphysics has tended to predicate change to entities that are numerically enduring things ("primary substances"). What changes are the qualities or properties (traits) of an entity, such that if a change has taken place an entity will either possess or be dispossessed of a property, which it had at an earlier time. According to Aristotle changes in accord with an entity's persistence are "accidental" changes, whereas sufficiently extensive change may bring about a change in the "essence" or kind of entity that exists.[29] A caterpillar and a butterfly are only the same kind of thing, if the terms refer to an enduring, though admittedly, developing insect. Likewise the ship of Theseus, whose original parts have been replaced over time, is still the same ship, as long as the replacement of its parts was conducted in a way that no change was ever that extensive to put in question the continuant, the basic design of the ship.[30]

When is a change an *ontological* change? In philosophy 'ontology' is the discipline concerned with the questions: what do the concepts of 'being' or 'existence' mean? What exists or what general kinds of things exist? Or, what sorts of things ultimately exist?[31] For our purposes if we talk of ontological change we are talking about a change in what exists, either in terms of kinds or particular entities. Accidental change, involving as it does a change in properties, qualities or relations of a numerically continuous existent are not an instance of ontological but qualitative change. If humankind becomes discontinuous, or

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[28] D. Peterson, *Possessed by God: A New Testament Theology of Sanctification and Holiness* (Leicester: Apollos, 1995), p.124.

[29] Saul Kripke has revived the Aristotelian concept of real essence in his concept of a "natural kind." Real essences are discovered by science and picks out numerical identity, whereas "nominal essence" refers to the accidental features by which we may pick out instances of a kind on a naive level. S. Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (Oxford: OUP, 1980).

[30] Bruce Aune, *Metaphysics. The Elements* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p.82.

[31] See, Edward Craig, "Ontology", *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Vol.?, ed. by E. Craig (London/New York: Routledge, 1998), p.117.

Peter is killed and his body matter is made into a lamp, these would be examples of ontological changes to the order of existing things. In relation to human persons the category of personal identity refers to the continuation of numerical identity:[32] what it is for Peter to be the same person at time t_1 as at time t_2. Hence a change of personal identity would involve an ontological change. Qualitative identity in the domain of human persons refers principally to human personality, for example, my development of an aggressive or generous disposition to my character.[33] This would not constitute a case of ontological change.

It has become quite fashionable in some theological circles to conceive of ontology in purely relational terms, whereby 'being' is identified with relations.[34] Certainly we can accept that entities possess *relations* and *relational* properties.

> *Relations* are like properties, except that instead of applying to single things, they link pairs or triples (etc.) of things in specific orders. Thus, if Jack loves Jill, then the *love* relation holds between Jack and Jill in that order.[35]

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[32] This distinction is very well applied to relational conceptions of personhood by Harriet Harris, "Should we say that Personhood is Relational?", *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 51 No.2 (1998), pp.214-234. She argues that relational conceptions of personhood, which are currently in vogue, treat "discussions about personality or about the sense of one's self" as "discussions about personhood (what it is to be a person) and about personal identity (what it is to be the same person over time)." ibid., pp.216-17. Harris argues that: "Persons can change qualitatively within and of themselves, but in changing *themselves* their numerical identity is unchanged." ibid., p.218. She writes further, "We do not want to say that a different personal identity is established every time one's personality changes..." ibid., p.222. She continues, that logically speaking, "We cannot jump from recognising the relationality involved in being a person to affirming that persons are relational entities" ibid., pp.221-2.

[33] Vincent Brummer draws a similar distinction when he writes, "my person is given in desires, character-traits, characteristics etc. which I endorse in my second order volitions and authentically want to motivate my actions. As object my identity is *given*; as a person I *choose* my identity." V. Brummer, "Religious Belief and Personal Identity," *NZSTRP*, Vol.38 (1996), p.157. He goes on to add that what I would prefer to call our *relational* or *psychological* identity is not just chosen by me (necessary but not *sufficient* condition) but constituted in the interaction between subject and world. The relational constituent of identity, "mutual identification," is fundamental. ibid., p.158. Harris accuses Brummer of conflating "personal identity with a sense of one's self." ibid., p.220. She argues that his concept of mutual identification, "presupposes that there is a continuous someone to whom it is important that affirmation be received.... Neither object identity nor personal identity as described by Brummer picks out the continuity of this someone to whom personal and moral development is important. Personal identity fluctuates according to our relation with others. Object identity, which comprises our actual personality traits as well as our physical characteristics, must also be subject to ongoing change." ibid., p.221.

[34] "*To be* and *to be in relation* become identical." John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*: *Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York, St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1985), p.89. See also, Colin E. Gunton, *The One, the Three and the Many. God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), pp.214; and Carver T. Lu, *Being and Relation. A Theological Critique of Western Dualism and Individualism* (Edinburgh, Scottish Academic Press, 1987).

[35] Michael Jubien, *Contemporary Metaphysics* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1997), p. 38.

A *relational* property is one that is predicated of an entity on the grounds of a specific relation obtaining, such as, Jack having the property of loving Jill. Relations act like properties in the sense that one may change a certain amount of relations ('accidental'), without bringing about a change of the kind of thing that exists (an 'ontological change').[36] There can be no doubt that the category of *relation* is an integral one to metaphysics. According to Justus Buchler's principle of ordinality: "To be is to be an order of traits and a constituent of other orders. It is to be a location of traits, located among the traits of the world."[37] On Buchler's view:

> There can be no complex [i.e. ordinal location] without relations. For a trait to obtain, for it to be and be the (discriminable) trait that it is, is for it to be delimited. To be delimited is to be conditioned, environed by limiting and enabling conditions: It is to be located in an order that *provides* for this trait to obtain rather than any other.[38]

On the other hand, the category of relation although integral, is one out of many metaphysical categories and certainly not identical to being. A change of relation in most instances does not necessarily constitute an ontological change.

I.0102) The Spirit.

Why is the *Spirit* the key Divine *hypostasis*[39] involved in bringing about Christian *metamorphosis*? According to St. Paul the gift of the Spirit is the *arrabon* ('down payment') of God in relation to the fulfilment of His promises.[40] Building on this Pauline vision of the Spirit's eschatological role St. Basil the Great describes the Spirit as the "perfecting cause" of creation.[41] Colin Gunton explicates this idea: "The Spirit is thus the agent of the Father's determination to bring all things into relation to himself through Christ: the agent of God's perfecting of the creation."[42] As the "perfecting cause" the Spirit

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[36] A relational change takes place if *X* has relation R1 to another entity *A* at a certain time and another relation R2 at a later point. H.H. Price, *Thinking and Experience* (London, Hutchinson University Library, 1953), ch.1.

[37] Quoted in Beth J. Singer, "Intersubjectivity without subjectivism," *Man and World*, Vol.24 (1991), p.323.

[38] ibid., p.323.

[39] I use the term "hypostasis" in line with the discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity by the Church Fathers, to refer to a particular member of the Trinity. Some theologians prefer the term "person." I have argued elsewhere that such a use of the term can be unhelpful and therefore, for want of a better term, I stick with the Greek original. R.M. Fermer, "The Limits of Trinitarian Theology as a Methodological Paradigm," *NZSTRP*, Vol.41 [1999], p.163ff.

[40] See: II Cor.1.22; 5.5.

[41] St.Basil the Great, *On the Holy Spirit*, XV.36 and 38.

[42] Gunton, "God the Holy Spirit," in *Theology Through the Theologians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), p.120.

brings about *new creation*, which given the Spirit's role in creation (Gen.1.2) is the reason why the Nicene Creed emulates I Corinthians 15.45 in calling the Spirit the "life giver". It is the Spirit who bestows and maintains faith,[43] and who grants sonship to the believer (Gal.4.6) and integration into the body of Christ (I Cor.6.11). Part of the Spirit's role for Paul is *liberative* in bringing about the subjective appropriation of Christian revelation.[44] It is quite clear from the Pauline corpus that one may interpret the Spirit's role as that of the pre-eminent Divine *hypostasis* engaged in accomplishing the application of redemption. Kilian McDonnell refers to the "contact function" of the Spirit, as the "universal point of contact between God and history" as leading from Christ to the Father, and hence, following the fourth century liturgical formulae, "from the Father, through Christ His Son, in the Spirit, to the Father, blessed Trinity, one God."[45] He comments:

> Both Christ and the Spirit are at the center but in different ways: Christ as the 'what' and the Spirit as the 'how.' And this 'how,' the Spirit is a way of knowing Jesus and the Father; as a 'how,' the Spirit is a way the Father through Christ has contact with history and the Church. The contact function is a mode of the 'how.'[46]

This conception of the Spirit being the primary Divine *hypostasis* involved in Christian *metamorphosis*, is re-enforced in both Pauline and Johannine pneumatology by their reworking of the Hebrew concept of *Shekinah*, to talk of the mode of relation or presence of the Spirit. The Hebrew concept of the *Shekinah*, which stemmed from the cultic language referring initially to the “tabernacle”, or tent, where God “dwelt” amidst his people, originally in the transportable Ark, and then, after the entry into the temple, the sanctuary, the “Holy of holies,” on Zion. It referred to the presence of God to His people, the particular indwelling of God in concrete space and time, an act of God precisely because God is by nature not to be contained. Through indwelling a particular space and

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[43] See: II Cor.4.13; I Cor.12.3; Gal.5.5. The gift of faith is associated with the language of the gift of the Spirit, the receiving of the Spirit and baptism by the Spirit (e.g. John 7.37-39; Acts 2.38; 11.15-17; Rom.8.9; Gal.3.2; Heb.6.4).

[44] See: II Cor.3.17; Rom.8.21; cf. Isa.42.1ff, 61.1ff.

[45] K. McDonnell, "A Trinitarian Theology of the Holy Spirit?" *Theological Studies*, Vol.46 (1985), p.227.

[46] ibid., p.215. McDonnell continues this point, by displaying its wider meaning for theology: "In hermeneutic terms, pneumatology is the universal (because coextensive with the reach of Christ's work) horizon determining the interpretation of all reality. There is, therefore, a two-directioned hermeneutical function to pneumatology. In one direction, it is both the point of entry and the hermeneutical principle for the interpretation of Christology and Trinity, and in the other direction, it is the point of entry and hermeneutical principle for the interpretation of history and ecclesiology..... It does not threaten Christology or the cross. The reason: it is within the larger movement of life from the Father to the Father. As long as pneumatology is truly Trinitarian, the controls are built in." ibid., p.212.

time, God can identify with His people and with their struggles.[47] For Paul the *Shekinah*, God's Spirit filled sanctuary, becomes the very body of the Christian,[48] as well as the singular indwelling of the Spirit among God's people (I Cor.6.19-20). The Spirit will lead His chosen people through the trials of the Christian life (Gal.5.16ff), as the *Shekinah* was God's presence with His people during the Exodus. Echoing Ezekiel 36.26, this indwelling of the Spirit is to be an indwelling of the 'heart' (II Cor.1.22; 3.3; Gal.4.6; Rom.2.29; 5.5), the term which Hebrew scripture reserves for the union of the cognitive, the affective and the volitional aspects of a person.

For John, writing at a time when the unfulfilled eschatological expectations of the first generation Christian community had to be addressed,[49] the Hebrew concept of *Shekinah*[50] is mirrored in his language of the indwelling (*meno, menein*) of the Spirit in the believer. This in turn is inextricably tied to his understanding of the bestowal of "another paraclete."[51] R.E. Brown writes that John presents "the Paraclete as the Holy Spirit in a special role, namely, as the personal presence of Jesus in the Christian while Jesus is with the Father."[52] The Spirit as that other "paraclete" is intimately bound to Jesus, yet is not

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[47] Such language is linked with the Hebrew conception of a clean heart, as Westermann comments in relation to Psalm 51: "[T]he clean heart and the right spirit are endangered when fellowship with God is destroyed (compare v.4); so the speaker asks that he may always be one with God." C. Westermann, *The Living Psalms* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), p. 98.

[48] See I Cor.3.16; II Cor.6.16; Eph.2.22. As Gordon Fee comments: "What is significant for our purposes is that Paul specifically uses this imagery and the OT motif of God's presence in the context of *the Spirit's presence in the midst of the people of God* as they are constituted on the basis of the new covenant, effected by Christ and actualised by the Spirit. Here is how the living God is now present with his people, expressed most clearly in Eph.2.22: the church is being raised up to become a holy temple in the Lord, built up together as 'a dwelling for God by His Spirit'." G. Fee, *God's Empowering Spirit: the Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1994), pp.844-845.

[49] C.K. Barrett, "The Holy Spirit in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol.I (1950), pp.1-15.

[50] It should be noted that Philo follows Stoic form in talking of the dwelling of the divine *nous or logos* in man.

[51] Don Carson explicates the term: "The Greek term *parakletos*....is the verbal adjective of *parakaleo*, lit. 'to call alongside', and hence 'to encourage', 'to exhort'. The verbal adjective has passive force, and is roughly equivalent to *ho parakeklemenos*, 'one who is called alongside'." D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1991), p.499. Carson goes on to bring out the meaning of *parakletos* as advocate: "In secular Greek, *parakletos* primarily means 'legal assistant, advocate', i.e. someone who helps another in court, whether as an advocate, a witness, or a representative....Moreover, the passive form does not rule out the possibility that the Paraclete may be an active speaker on behalf of someone before someone else. In John's usage, the legal overtones are sharpest in 16:7-11, but there the Paraclete serves rather more as a prosecuting attorney than as counsel for the defence." ibid.. See also R.E. Brown, "Appendix V: The Paraclete," in *The Gospel of John* XIII - XXI (Doubleday & Co., New York 1966), pp. 1135- 1143.

[52] R.E. Brown, (XIII-XXI), p.1139.

identical with him.[53] This is what Kilian McDonnell refers to as the "mutuality between Christ and the Spirit."[54] The role of the Spirit here ensures the continuation and completion of the mission of revelation initiated by Jesus.[55] The Spirit as *parakletos* has echoes of the Hebrew portrayal of the Messiah as *menachem*, 'comforter,' and helps to emphasise the intimacy of this new mode of presence or relation. The content of the Spirit's disclosure will not be Himself, but that of the Son and the Father, to "bring to remembrance all things that I [Jesus] said to you."[56] John Ashton compares the Spirit's function in John with the role given to the *angelus interpres* of the intertestamental writings of the Jewish Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. The *Angelus interpres* is sent from heaven to clarify what could not be fully comprehended without him (cf. Uriel in 4 Ezra).[57] Thus, the Spirit's role is not just to re-iterate what has already been given in Christ.[58] As in Paul, the Spirit has the eschatological function of completing revelation and will expound, "what is to come"(John 16.13). In sum, what I have attempted to show is that the Spirit, as primarily presented by Paul and John, is the pre-eminent Divine *hypostasis* engaged in Christian *metamorphosis*.

Some explanation needs to be given of why I have set up the *generating question* in pneumatological terms given the history of theology. There has been in recent theology an attempt to redress the lack of attention that pneumatology has received in the history of theology.[59] In the history of theology the subject matter of this thesis would find its

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[53] "I will come back to you" John 14.18, and yet the Paraclete is "another Comforter" John 14.16. R.E. Brown observes, "John insists that Jesus will be in heaven with the Father while the Paraclete is on earth in the disciples; and so the two have different roles." Brown (XIII-XXI), p.1141.

[54] He writes: "[E]very Christological statement has its pneumatological counterpart - something which seems to have been perceived as early as Ignatius of Antioch. A second aggregate of theological content in addition to Christology is not thereby proposed. What is recommended is that another dimension at the interior of the Christological mystery be recognised, just as 'being in the Spirit' is an interpretative imperative at the interior of 'being in Christ.' The mutuality and reciprocity are at the very core of the mystery. Though there may be temporal priorities to the visible mission of the Son, as a matter of fact the invisible missions are simultaneous, to which corresponds the concomitance of 'being in the Spirit' and 'being in Christ,' as also in the liturgical doxology 'through Christ in the Spirit.'" McDonnell, p.213.

[55] "I am in my Father, and you in Me, and I in you." John 14.19b.

[56] John 14.26b cf. 16.14. As R.E. Brown comments, "Virtually everything that has been said about the Paraclete has been said elsewhere in the Gospel about Jesus." Brown, Vol. II, p.1140. Earlier he notes that the principle role of the Paraclete is to "speak through the disciples (xv 26-27) in defence of the absent Jesus." Brown (XIII-XXI), p.1136.

[57] J. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp.420-4; cf. R.E. Brown (XIII-XXI), pp.1138-9.

[58] Gary D. Badcock, *The Light of Truth and the Fire of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), pp.33-34.

[59] Augustine comments on the neglect of the doctrine of the Spirit in *On the Faith and the Creed* 8, 19, 20. G. S. Hendry comments that the creedal formulations of the Spirit are verging on being "slipshod." George S.

closest, though not identical, home in the traditional grace-nature-freedom debate. One of the reasons why this thesis does not find its home perfectly within this debate is because the *generating question* is purposefully set up in pneumatological terms, rather than using the concept of grace. This is one of the differences between my work and that of John Oman's, *Grace and Personality*. Despite his wish for a doctrine grace which respects both Divine and human "personality," he continues to use the language of grace out of conjunction with the *hypostasis* of the Spirit. In Scripture pneumatological language is clearly primary and the same is true of the Greek Fathers.

Robert Jenson has argued that the priority of the language of grace over pneumatology is, in part, the outcome of Augustine's conception of the Trinity, which conceived of the three "persons" as "functionally indistinguishable":

> Thus Augustine could no longer conceptualize the saving relation between God and creatures by saying that the Father and the Son are transformingly present in the Spirit, as the Greek originators of trinitarianism had done..... Augustine was left with the standard position of Western culture-religion: on the one hand there is God, conceived as a supernatural entity who acts causally on us; and on the other hand there are the results among us of this causality. In the subsequent Latin tradition, God and the objects of God's causality are then both interpreted accordingly: they are 'substances', fundamentally self-sustaining and self-contained entities, who 'act' over against each other, the result of which action is in us a *habitus*, an acquired disposition to behave and react in ways obedient to the will of God.[60]

Interestingly John Oman too shares Jenson's judgement that an impersonal doctrine of grace is to be derived from the theology of Augustine,[61] but does not follow this up with a

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Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), p.13. Barth talked of the possibility in future theology of shifting theology's imbalance from Christology to pneumatology. Karl Barth, "Concluding Unscientific Postscript on Schleiermacher," in *The Theology of Schleiermacher* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1982). K. McDonnell takes up Barth's diagnosis, and argues that the lack of direction of much pneumatology results from the displacement of pneumatology from its trinitarian context. McDonnell, "A Trinitarian Theology." Elsewhere, he writes: "In the West, we think essentially in Christological categories, with the Holy Spirit as an extra, an addendum, a 'false' window to give symmetry and balance to theological design. We build up our large theological constructs in constitutive Christological categories, and then, in a second, non-constitutive moment, we decorate the already constructed system with pneumatological bubbles, a little Spirit tinsel." K. McDonnell, "The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit": *Theology Today*, Vol.39 (1982), p.142.
A renaissance in pneumatology may be reflected in the decision of the seventh assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, Australia, in 1990, to choose the topic: "Come, Holy Spirit - Renew the Whole Creation." Papers from this meeting are to be found in the *Ecumenical Review*, Vols. 41 & 42 (1989/90).

[60] R.W. Jenson, "The Holy Spirit", in *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol.2, ed. by, C.E. Braaten and R.W. Jenson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), p.126.

[61] Oman, pp. 38, 40ff.

reassertion of the importance of the personal nature of the trinitarian *hypostaseis*. However, this thesis is not into a historical theology blame game. If the salient points of Jenson's analysis are correct,[62] namely, that the language of grace has tended to displace pneumatology and that the language of causality has been dominant over the language of personal relations, then, this lends support to the construction of the *generating question* and the subsequent *generating hypothesis* of the thesis, which proposes a Personalist model of the Spirit-creature relation in *metamorphosis*.

The other theological locus in which the relation of Divine and human freedom and agency has been discussed is the debate, which ensues from Thomas Aquinas' distinction between *primary* and *secondary* causation and the doctrine of general concurrence.[63] However, this theological discussion is also couched in non-pneumatological terms and has its central focus in the doctrine of creation. As will be argued in Chapter 7, this may constitute a useful move, for our purposes, in qualifying and contextualising the *generating question* within Christian doctrine, but cannot be considered to provide a direct treatment of the question. In addition, the largest and most influential treatment of the doctrine of the Spirit, certainly in catholic theology, in this century, Yves Congar's *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, a three-volume work, has nothing to say on this issue.[64] One can only conjecture that Congar felt the matter was best addressed in the context of the traditional discussions of primary-secondary causation. Perhaps, he, like other authors, believed that this question is not one that may be profitably answered. That option shall be discussed later.

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[62] Jenson is supported by C.E. Gunton, "God, grace and freedom," in *Intellect and Action: Elucidations on Christian Theology and the Life of Faith* (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 2000), ch. 10. Fergus Kerr in a review of Gunton's book argues that the view that Gunton attacks, namely, grace as 'some kind of substance imparted to creatures' is a straw-man. F. Kerr, "Reviews," *Blackfriars*, Vol. 82, 2001, pp.197-200. Kerr argues: "Aquinas is familiar with the idea that grace is some kind of a substance. He insists.... that grace cannot be a substance.... grace can only be an accidental form of the soul.... Rather grace is 'a kind of quality of soul' - *qualitatis quaedam animae* .... in the same sort of way as beauty may be said to be a quality of the someone's body. He has nothing reified in mind." ibid., pp.198-9. This is a 'supernatural quality' for Aquinas, but, as Kerr explains, "not a quality that would act upon the soul like some efficient cause.... but only on the model of a formal cause." ibid.

[63] For example, although the modern Roman Catholic theologian K. Rahner has important discussions of human freedom and the relationship of grace and nature, perhaps the closest he comes to addressing the *generating* question of my thesis is in the *Grundkurs* where he examines briefly how human autonomy is compatible with creatureliness and dependence upon the Divine. Karl Rahner, "Creatureliness: Not a particular instance of a causal law," in *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, trans. by W. V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1995 [1976]), p.76ff (II.4). Here Rahner largely utilises the Thomist arguments concerning the relation between Divine and human causality.

[64] Yves Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* Vol.I-III (New York: Seabury Press, 1983).

Some readers may wonder whether my thesis' focus on the Spirit violates the Scholastic principle: *opera sacrosanctae Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*. Such a fear is unfounded. It is Scripture that in its testimony to the work of the Son marks out the Spirit as the Divine *hypostasis* principally involved in the application of redemption.[65] To admit this, is not to violate the principle, for insofar as the trinitarian *hypostaseis* are a unity in *perichoresis*, then, while one *hypostasis* may be pre-eminently involved in one field of operation, the unity of the One God (*ad intra*) requires that all three be co-involved. The *metamorphosis* of the Christian believer is a created effect of the One God, and not of the Spirit alone. Bernard Lonergan explicates this by using the distinction between *efficient* causation and *final* causation: it is the One God and not the Spirit who is the efficient cause of Christian *metamorphosis*, but it is the Spirit, as the one *sent* by the Father and the Son who is the final cause.[66] Daniel Helminiak explains:

> 'By the Holy Spirit' would entail efficient causality, disqualified by the *ad extra* rule. ' Because of the Holy Spirit' suggests final causality. The mission of the Holy Spirit is that *because of which* God effects transformation in the human.[67]

If the specific mission of the Spirit is not recognised, then, the danger is that we return to Jenson's point, that the Divine *hypostaseis* become "functionally indistinguishable."[68] The Spirit, as J.V. Taylor puts it, is the "Go-Between God,"[69] and as such is the "go-between" not only of the Father and the Son, but also of the Father, Son and the world. Hence the Spirit's function *ad extra* is precisely to make known the One Triune God, *ad intra*. If one

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[65] Wolfhart Pannenberg wisely argues that the distinction of the Divine *hypostaseis* ought not to follow Origen's account in *De principiis* in founding them on the different spheres of operation of each: "One can know the intertrinitarian distinctions and relations, the inner life of God, only through the revelation of the Son, not through the different spheres of the operation of the one God in the world. Only subsequently can one relate specific aspects of the unity of the divine working in the world to trinitarian distinctions that are known already." W. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology* Vol.I. trans. G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), p.273.

[66] Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo Trino*, Pars II (Rome: Pontifica Universitatis Gregoriana, 1964), pp. 226- 238.

[67] Daniel A. Helminiak, *Spiritual Development: An Interdisciplinary Study* (Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1987), p. 193.

[68] Colin Gunton supports this conclusion: "No objection can be taken to this principle if it means that everything that God does, He does in the unity of his being. But if it is taken to mean, as it sometimes appears to be, that no characteristic and distinctive forms of action can be ascribed to Father, Son and Spirit, there appears to be no point in distinguishing between them." C.E. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), pp.3. Helminiak puts the matter this way: "The difference among the Three in God does not lie in what they have or what they are. The difference lies in how they are and how they have what they have." Helminiak, pp. 185. Likewise, K. McDonnell refers to the "mutuality" of the work of Christ and the Spirit, but comments: "Though one can say that Christ works through the Spirit, that cannot be turned around. The Spirit does not work through Christ. In some respects Christ and the Spirit are interchangeable, but not in all." McDonnell, "A Trinitarian Theology", pp.210-11.

[69] J.V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1972).

asks who is doing the transforming in Christian *metamorphosis*, the answer must be a trinitarian one. The Spirit as the "perfecting cause" mediates the Son, in whose image we are to be *formed*, without whose Incarnation the Christian life is void and the Spirit lacking a mission. The Son in turn mediates the Father, living a life in obedience to the will of the Father through the mediation of the Spirit. As the Triune God is one, all three co-inhere in the events of the Divine economy. As McDonnell writes: "Pneumatology is apart when it is divorced from the Trinitarian controls and principles."[70]

I.0103) Common Intuitions Concerning Human Freedom and Personal Identity.

Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, in search of "the highest of all practical goods," adopts a methodology, to begin with at least, which examines what "ordinary and cultured people" say, to arrive at what might be considered to be basic human intuitions concerning the subject.[71] Likewise, the *generating question* is constructed by utilising, what may be considered to be some common human intuitions concerning freedom and personal identity, as articulated by the western philosophical tradition.[72] Just why I choose to adopt such a starting point will be made apparent in section II.01, in my discussion of the methodology employed in this thesis. The claim is not that the concepts of freedom and personal identity explicated below are to be rigidly applied to the theological subject matter of the thesis, as if they were fixed *a priori* concepts. Rather, they are intended to be provisional definitions, for the purpose of setting up the *generating question*, which will subsequently *interact* with and undergo modification in relation to Christian conceptions of freedom and agency (Chapter 5).

In adopting this approach I am purposefully avoiding the controversy in traditional philosophy between Determinism and Libertarianism, or Incompatibilism and

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[70] McDonnell, "A Trinitarian Theology", p.214.

[71] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*. Book I.iv.

[72] Philosophy depends on intuitions. Arguments are structures around intuitions and one can only avoid *impasse* if enough intuitions are shared or certain intuitions are relinquished. Although philosophical impasses look as if they may admit of no resolution, they seldom are so self-contained that all argument becomes impossible. If that is the case the revision of intuitions seems possible. My claim that there are common intuitions concerning human freedom and personal identity, is not to assume that people share a universal stock of intuitions, that clearly seems to be empirically inaccurate, or that "common sense" remains somehow unconditioned by culture. C. Geertz, "Common Sense as a Cultural System," in *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology*. ed. by C. Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1983). Rather a sharing of intuitions both within and across cultures and traditions is possible and something to be aimed at. Such a belief is consonant with the realist epistemology that I espouse. In the case of the claims to common intuitions above, these are held largely in the tradition of western philosophy.

Compatibilism. There is a layer of debate, at a more first-order level, which is not dependent on the outcome of that dispute, which Harry Frankfurt argues may offer wider acceptance.[73] Human freedom is a condition involving voluntary choice, defined as, "one which is in accordance with the agent's true nature and his or her desires."[74] One is free if one wants to be moved by the motives or events, which do propel action. A fundamental criterion of freedom is that the source of a free action originate in a person's *own* mental system, the interaction between will and intellect.[75] Eleonore Stump argues that this criterion is to be found in Thomas Aquinas' conception of, what she calls, the will as part of "a dynamic feedback system composed primarily of the will and the intellect, but also the passions,"[76] and it is the intrinsic origination of an act from this system, and not by an external cause, which captures the primary *necessary* condition for freedom. Hence, the definition of voluntary choice above needs to make reference to the role of the intellect in apprehending what is desirable. As Stump explicates Aquinas, this is action caused by an *intrinsic principle*:

> A voluntary act is thus a special case of being moved by an intrinsic principle. Whatever is moved by an intrinsic principle in such a way that it acts for an end which it cognizes as an end has within itself the principle of its action.[77]

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[73] H. Frankfurt, "Freedom of Will and the Concept of a Person," *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.68 (1971), p.20. R.C. Moberly in his critique of a definition of freedom that solely focuses on "an inherent capacity of equal choice between two alternatives" offers us another reason for making this move. As Moberly explains: "Unless *a* and *b* happen to be precisely equal in goodness, and also in wisdom, unless, that is to say, upon the improbable and unimportant hypothesis of an alternative which is absolutely indifferent from every point of view whatever, no man of any growth in wisdom or character can *equally* do *a* or *b*." *Atonement and Personality* (London: John Murray, [reprint] 1924), p. 222.

[74] Ted Honderich, *How Free Are You?* (Oxford: OUP, 1993), p.141. A more refined account of the relationship of freedom to desires and higher-order volitions will be presented in Chapter 5 in the discussion of Harry Frankfurt's definition of freedom of will. It should be noted here that both Frankfurt and E. Stump consider the ability of an agent to act on higher-order desires to be a condition of the identification of personhood. See: E. Stump, "Persons: Identification and Freedom, " *Philosophical Topics*, Vol.24 No.2 (1996), pp.200-202.

[75] Stump, "Persons," p. 201. It is worth noting that this Thomist position has not simply been rediscovered by Stump. The early 20th century Anglican theologian R.C. Moberly made a similar point (and he was not untypical): "Free will is the power of so doing the things which we do, whatever their character, that when we do them they are really our own; and our own selves are really expressed in the doing of them." Moberly, pp.223 -224. He goes on to make the connection with theology, namely, that "our own selves" are only ever found in relationship with God.

[76] See: E. Stump, "Aquinas's Account of Freedom: Intellect and Will," *Monist*, Vol. 80 (1997), p.581. For Aquinas the will has been created as a hunger for the good, the good as represented by the intellect, influenced by passion and the will. Freedom is located for Aquinas in the will as subject, and the reason as the cause, as Stump explains: "That is, the property of freedom inheres in the will, which is the subject for the property, but it does so because of the intellect; will's relations to and interactions with the intellect are the source of the freedom of the will." ibid., p. 584.

[77] ibid., p.584.

This is distinguished from action caused by an *extrinsic* principle:

> That the voluntary movement of the will be from an extrinsic principle, Aquinas says, is impossible. This is not an empirical claim but a conceptual one... If something extrinsic to the agent were to act on the will with efficient causation, then the tie of the will to the intellect, from which acts of will get their voluntary character, would be broken, and so the act of will would not be voluntary.[78]

She holds that Aquinas' position complements and can guide modern philosophical accounts of freedom and responsibility, which wish to give reason a role, such as John Fischer's reason-responsive mechanism in agency.[79] This criterion may be worked out differently according to an Incompatibilist[80] or Compabitibilist position,[81] both attesting to the importance of ownership of the acts, with the difference being that for the Incompatibilist an act can not truly be said to originate in a person if it is causally determined, or at the very least not causally determined by something outside of the agent.

The importance of such a criterion has been shown by the so-called "Frankfurt-style counterexamples" to the principle of alternative possibilities,[82] namely, the famous

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[78] ibid., pp.584-5.

[79] J. M. Fischer, "Responsiveness and Moral Responsibility," in *Responsibility, Character, and the Emotions*, ed. by Ferdinand Schoeman (Cambridge: CUP, 1987). Fischer talks of "weak reasons-responsiveness" which amounts to the state where for an action A by P, there is a possible world in which P performs an alternative action to A, because there is a sufficient reason for doing other than A. He considers that for an agent to be responsible the actual mechanism on which freedom of action is based must be weakly "reason-responsive." On Stump's own criticisms of Fischer's account of reason-responsiveness see her, "Intellect, Will, Principle of Alternate Possibilities," in *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy*, ed. M.D. Beaty (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), pp.274-276.

[80] Thus, from an Incompatibilist position Linda Zagzebski explicates the criterion in the following way: "If the world is causally determined, my act does not really originate in *me*. For my act really to be my own, it must have a certain kind of independence of any conditions which make it the case that I cannot do otherwise. My act must be unaffected by the presence or absence of these conditions; the explanation for its occurrence must not include these conditions to any significant degree. If my act is causally determined, however, it would not have occurred without its causes (suitably described), and the explanation for its occurrence gives a central place to its causes." L. Zagzebski, "Foreknowledge and Human Freedom", in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. eds. by P.L. Quinn and C. Taliaferro. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p.295.

[81] From a Compatibilist perspective a similar criterion can be perceived, as Galen Strawson explains: "Your character, personality, preferences, and general motivational set may be entirely determined by events for which you are in no way responsible (by your genetic inheritance, upbringing, subsequent experience and so on). But you do not have to be in control of any of these things in order to have compatibilist freedom. They do not constrain or compel you, because compatibilist freedom is just a matter of being able to choose and act in the way one prefers or thinks best *given how one is*..... It is compatible with determinism even though it follows from determinism that every aspect of your character, and everything you will ever do, was already inevitable before you were born." G. Strawson, "Free Will," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig, Vol.III (London: Routledge, 1998), p.744.

[82] Harry Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility," *Journal of Philosophy* Vol.66, (1969), pp. 828 - 839.

Libertarian criterion for freedom that a person has free will and moral responsibility only when s/he "could have done otherwise" in relation to their actual willed action. A Frankfurt-style counterexample to the principle envisages a case of action in which no alternative is in fact possible, but in which the agent involved presumes he could have done otherwise. Thus, I am driving a car, but unbeknown to me a villain has tampered with the brakes. I approach traffic lights that are just turning red and orange, yet I decide not to stop. I consider this to be a free act, for which I admit responsibility when I receive the indicting police photographs through the post. In actuality, I could not have done otherwise. Frankfurt draws the following conclusion:

> Now if someone had no alternative to performing a certain action but did not perform it because he was unable to do otherwise, then he would have performed exactly the same action even if he *could* have done otherwise. The circumstances that made it impossible for him to do otherwise could have been subtracted from the situation without affecting what happened or why it happened in any way.[83]

What this shows is that the principle of alternative possibilities is not a necessary condition for freedom of action or moral responsibility.[84] My decision not to stop at the traffic lights is not determined by a cause *extrinsic* to me, but is the result of my own deliberation and will. Rather, what is more fundamental is the origination of the act in my *own* mental *system*, from what Aquinas refers to as being moved by an *intrinsic principle*, to wit, the interaction of intellect and will. Some actions may be necessary, yet as long as they are caused by an intrinsic principle they can still be considered to be free.[85]

Such a criterion of freedom fits well with the distinction and interrelation between, what has traditionally been called, *negative* (freedom *from*) and *positive* (freedom *for*) freedom:

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[83] Ibid., p.837.

[84] John M. Fischer supports this position in his, "Responsibility and Control," *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.89, (1982), pp.24-40. See also Edward Wierenga, *The Nature of God: An Inquiry into Divine Attribute.* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp.74-85; and, Eleonore Stump, "Libertarian Freedom and the Principle of Alternative Possibilities," in *Faith, Freedom and Rationality*. eds. Jeff Jordan & D. Howard-Snyder (Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1996), pp.73-88.

[85] Such a position has certain theological advantages, for it explains why the redeemed in heaven are free, yet necessarily cannot sin, and why God is impeccable. In both cases goodness is transparently apprehended by the intellect, and hence, there is no alternative possibility. At the same time, such an outcome is intrinsically caused, because the will seeks goodness, and the intellect represents a good which is transparent to the will which sets it into motion, and this interaction of the will and the intellect stem from intrinsic faculties of the agent. E. Stump, Beaty, pp.270-4.

"Freedom is always *of* someone, *from* something, *to* do, have or be something."[86] *Negative freedom* is often termed "freedom *from* constraint (*force majeure*)", defined by Hobbes in this way: "a free agent is he that can do as he will, and forbear as he will, and that liberty is the absence of external impediments."[87] We might wish to add here, "within the limits of our factual parameters as human beings." This need not refer only to external obstacles or constraints but also internal ones. One's freedom is constrained if one is forced to do something at gun-point that one does not wish, but equally if a person is on a mountain and totally gripped by fear of heights, he will be *internally* constrained.[88] Freedom from constraint allows for freedom of ability, hence *positive freedom*. *Positive freedom* holds that in the wake of freedom from constraint humans have the capacity to deliberate, choose, and act on the basis of reasons about ends as well as means, which as we have outlined above stems from the interaction of intellect and will. The Frankfurt-style counterexamples show that alternative possibilities are not a *necessary* condition of freedom, rather than maintaining that most human agency takes place in the absence of such possibilities. Indeed, a free society or a free individual is often considered to be one for whom there is a range of open possibilities, as a result of which *positive freedom* may be exercised, and hence, freedom *to* pursue one's worthwhile wants and desires. However, as Stump argues alternative possibilities are non-essential properties of freedom.[89]

Another useful distinction in philosophical discussion of the concept of freedom that will have import subsequently is a distinction that parallels that which can be made in explication of the concept of reason, between *formal* and *substantive* reason. *Formal* freedom, like *formal* reason, refers to the basic structure or conditions that allow us to exercise freedom.[90] In the case of formal reason, these basic structures refer to the fundamental laws of logic, such as the law of non-contradiction. Wolfhart Pannenberg defines formal freedom as "our ability to distance ourselves from objects of perception,

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[86] P.H. Patridge, "Free Will," in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy Vol.3*, ed. by P. Edwards. London, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), p. 223.
[87] Thomas Hobbes, *Of Liberty and Necessity*, ed. M. Oakeshott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), p.223.
[88] See: Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities"; cf. Fischer "Responsibility and Control", pp.24 - 40.
[89] She uses the medieval term "an associated accident." Stump "Aquinas' Account of Freedom", p.592; "Libertarian Freedom", p.88.
[90] H.W. Klement, "Freiheit und Bindung menschlicher Entschreidungen," *Conceptus* Vol. 12 (1990), pp.25-42.

from conceived objects, and from our behavior relative to them."[91] *Substantive reason* provides *content* to the basic structure of reason. Hence, the intuition that there are universal moral truths might be a claim of substantive reason. Likewise *substantive freedom* refers to the content and direction of the exercise of freedom, which in theological terms pertains to the true *identity* and *destiny* of human beings in relation to God.[92]

What we mean by freedom is conditioned by the framework of our particular existence in *this* world, what John Macquarrie calls, the polarity between "possibility" and "facticity".[93] There are some things that are just "givens" of any particular existence, for example, our human equipment and the factual parameters of our world. Indeed, our very existence is initially "given" and not chosen.[94] In this sense, the human agent is *passively* constituted.[95] The human subject is certainly not *causa sui*, the cause of itself, as Nietzsche once remarked, able "to pull oneself up into existence by the hair, out of the swamps of nothingness."[96] Human freedom is a conditioned freedom, a freedom intrinsically linked to human abilities and the factual parameters of existence. Our human capacities, such as our ability to use language, to reflect and stand back from our present circumstances, give us the ability to envisage possibilities which allow us to have a much richer freedom than many other species that share our planet.

Freedom is related to another concept used in the *generating question*, namely, personal identity. We assign freedom or lack of it to an individual person; indeed, it is part of what

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[91] Pannenberg, Vol. II, p.259. Compare this to Pannenberg's discussion in *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*. trans. M.J. O'Connell (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1985), pp. 111-115.

[92] Wolfhart Pannenberg argues that *substantive* freedom is importantly connected to the concept of the *identity* of the agent: "It is this which gives rise to the demand that agents acknowledge their actions as their own and thus *accept* responsibility for them." Pannenberg *Anthropology*, pp.113. Pannenberg connects the concept of identity with that of destiny, "Human beings owe it to themselves - that is, to the true self of their as yet realised destiny - to correspond to this destiny of theirs and so to themselves." ibid., pp. 113-114.

[93] J. Macquarrie, *In Search of Humanity* (London: SCM Press, 1982).

[94] Oman, p. 69.

[95] This conception of passivity is to be distinguished from passivity within the operation of agency. For example, sensing things such as sublime aesthetic experiences, even some religious experiences, are considered to be passivity within agency. Of these experiences of passivity E. Stump writes: "An agent's intellect might take passivity in certain circumstances as a great good, and the agent's will would then desire that passivity in those circumstances. The agent's consequent passivity, even if it is a passivity in which 'all the motions of the soul are suspended,' doesn't contravene the agent's own intellect and will but rather has its source in them." Stump "Persons", p. 3. Passivity here is to be distinguished from the negative conception of passivity that Frankfurt sometimes uses: "insofar as a person's will is affected by considerations that are external to it, the person is being acted upon. To that extent, he is passive. The person is active, on the other hand, insofar as his will determines itself." H. Frankfurt, "Autonomy, Necessity, and Love," in *Necessity, Volition and Love* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.133.

it is to be a person. As we have already seen volition and action which stems from a *particular* human intellect and will is a condition of freedom, but also a means of identifying a human person.[97] If my consciousness is taken-over by aliens with a loss freedom of will, my personal identity is also put under question. Less dramatically, if I am totally constrained, if my scope for action is severely limited, my personhood is affected, that is, what we shall define below as, our *psychological* identity. A bizarre example of this was the purported action of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II, who took philosophical thought-experiments slightly too far, in ordering two newly born children to be locked away in a room in a castle, denied access to their mothers and the rest of the world. The result was that they died after a few years of life. This example does nothing more than indicate that our human flourishing depends on a certain amount of *positive* freedom, and ability to freely relate to others and the world around us. It indicates the intersubjective and interdependent nature of our agency, a matter to which we will return at another point in the thesis,[98] when an analogy is drawn between the "intersubjectivity" of Divine freedom and human freedom (Chapter 7).

As we have already the issue of personal identity is that of determining *numerical* identity of a person over time, and philosophers have arrived at varied answers. Our task is not to produce a comprehensive answer on this matter, but to discern some criteria, which may be applicable to our subject matter. Some philosophers consider that criteria relying on the first-person point of view, rather than the third-person perspective (e.g. the body, the brain), are of primary importance in establishing personal identity. J. R. Lucas argues that in so doing, the crucial test of personal identity over time is whether a coherent story can be told of the mental life of a particular person.[99] As persons we have the ability to conceive of ourselves as agents that extend over the past, present and future; that is the nature of our first-person perspective of ourselves and of the world around us. To disrupt the coherence and cohesion of such pictures which we form of ourselves as agents, is to displace internal adhesion and congruity, to wit, to lead to a loss of our sense of

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[96] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), Sc.21.

[97] "What is important is just that having this particular intellect and will is part of what it is to be this person, whether we take intellect and will as components of soul or as systems of brain modules." Stump "Persons", p.20.

[98] See Chapter 7.

[99] J.R. Lucas, "A Mind of One's Own," *Philosophy*, Vol.68 (1993), pp.457-471. A person is not just a bundle of experiences, but is a subject capable of forming intentions about the future and acting upon them.

(qualitative) identity, possibly our *numerical* identity as well. Our *qualitative* identity is not "immutably stable,"[100] but neither is it so fluid that it can withstand any degree of change or discontinuity. Hence, one may talk of the *personal integrity* of one's identity, as Brummer does by posing the question: "is my choice for this picture authentically my own, or has it in some way been imposed on me?"[101]

In terms of *numerical* identity, a disruption of one's first-person narrative may be caused by the intervention of some agent exterior to one, bringing under question the continuity of one's personal identity. This leads Lucas to argue against Derek Parfit's theory of personal identity, which employs thought-experiments of brain-transplants and brain splitting, in arguing that there is nothing more to personal identity than psychological identity.[102] Taking Parfit's example of brain fusion and fission from the first-person perspective, the result is chaotic and dissonant. In brain fission, for instance, what will happen to our prior intentions and plans for the future that were existent before the fission? Perhaps they will not survive the fission, if so, can we really say that we are the same person as before, or any sort of person whatsoever? The case of brain fusion leaves us with the possibility of two personalities in cohabitation. This begs the question of how two different sets of memories, desires, attitudes and intentions, fit together in any sort of coherent way? Having a coherent sense of personal identity, from the first-person point of view, is a crucial criterion of identity, and is at the core of human agency.

What this criterion suggests, of course, is that there is a continuing subject that allows the person to tell a coherent story about him/herself. This is principally being considered as a criterion of numerical identity, not qualitative identity. Although I may be able to show that there is qualitative identity in the story I tell, for example, I may have similar intentions and plans now as I did five years ago, nonetheless, there will also, presumably, be instances of qualitative change of my personality. Hence, what is at issue is not whether I am qualitatively identical to the person I was five years ago, but whether I am numerically identical, viz. I am the same subject, illustrated by me being able to tell a coherent story about myself. In this thesis the concept of identity is used sometimes in the

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[100] Brummer "Religious belief", p.164.
[101] ibid., p.162.
[102] Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), Part III.

qualitative and sometimes in the numerical sense, as defined above, without being interchangeable, and it shall be made clear what sense is being used on any particular occasion.

Finally, both freedom and personal identity are interconnected with human responsibility.[103] In general we are held to be responsible for what we do when we are acting freely. This relates to our earlier point concerning the link between freedom and human agency. When we claim that we are not responsible for an action or an event our excuse usually has something to do with the impairment of our freedom. We could not claim the achievements of love if we were in no way responsible for our actions, and if we could not claim responsibility we would lose our sense of dignity. What we care about, what we take responsibility for, shapes and makes up our qualitative identity. John Oman argues that the "moral personality" of a person, so crucial for the personal relationship desired of God with His creatures, can only be formed in an environment that allows for relative autonomy and moral independence. There must be space for self-consciousness and conscious interaction with the world, relative self-direction and determination.[104] Oman correlates the relation of independence and dependence of a person with moral reality to the relation of passivity and activity involved in the grace-freedom relationship:

> It is moral sincerity directed towards a reality beyond ourselves, in the midst of which we cannot be independent after any fashion we choose, but only by dependence on the guidance of truth. Yet this truth, which is of all things most independent of us, we can only follow by fidelity to our own insight. Thus, at the very spring of our consciousness, we find this inseparable demand to be dependent only by the right independence.[105]

I.02) A Restatement of the Generating Question.

Galen Strawson writes in the light of the *causa sui* fallacy:

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[103] Galen Strawson argues that to be ultimately morally responsible for one's actions, one would have to be *causa sui*, at least in certain crucial mental respects, and that this cannot be the case: "In order for one to be truly or ultimately responsible for *how one* is, in such a way that one can be truly morally responsible for *what one does*, something impossible has to be true: there has to be and cannot be, a starting point that constitutes an act or ultimate self-origination." *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p.747.

[104] See Oman, Chs.VI & VII. Oman is distinctly against Divine Command Theory: "An order imposed by God otherwise than through our own sense of right, however, exalted its demands, would be no true moral order." ibid., p.54. He is also a moral *realist*, maintaining a moral order that is mind-independent. ibid., pp.63-4.

[105] ibid., p.65.

> The claim, then, is not that people cannot change the way they are.... The claim is only that people cannot be supposed to change themselves in such a way as to be or become truly or ultimately responsible for the way they are, and hence for their actions.[106]

This thesis is about change, Christian *metamorphosis*, and the responsibility, freedom and identity involved in this change. In theological terms, the position critiqued by Strawson would constitute a *hyper*-Pelagianism, which is a heuristic extreme in theology. The question which a rejection of predicating *causa sui* to the human will and *hyper*-Pelagianism leaves us, concerns the role of limited creaturely responsibility and freedom in relation to Christian *metamorphosis*. The *generating question* can be restated. What is the place of human freedom and identity given the Spirit's agency in bringing about Christian *metamorphosis*? Is the personal identity displaced? Is human freedom bypassed? It is my contention that these are real questions, which require to be addressed seriously. It will be argued in Chapter 2 that some theological positions, in neglecting to address this question, result in a "Divine Fiat View" of Christian *metamorphosis*, one that is not compatible with our common intuitions concerning freedom and personal identity.

II.) Methodology.

II.01) Strategy 1: The Interaction of Philosophy and Theology.

In this sub-section the procedure upon which I have begun to rely in setting up the *generating question* is explicated, namely, the interaction of philosophy and theology. In this thesis philosophy will be used largely in the mode of conceptual analysis. In this way, philosophy can be considered to be supportive and complementary to theology.[107] When no effort is made by systematic theology to show that Christian beliefs are true, other than from an internal perspective, there is a danger of producing an exclusive description, separated from the rest of human epistemic practices and enterprises, in short, "a ghetto of arbitrary commitment."[108] There is another potential problem, namely, the very concepts

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[106] *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p.747.

[107] "This support consists, in part, of critical conceptual analysis, of testing the consistency of theological arguments, and partly also of proposing alternative options for a doctrine while taking the same religious context or doctrinal questions into account." Luco J. van den Brom, "The productive Interaction between Theology and Philosophy", *NZSTPR*, Vol 38 no.3 (1996), p.274.

[108] Roger Trigg outlines the difficulties of an approach which only asserts the truth of a particular revelation and whose grounds for doing so are purely intrinsic: "Even if it is to remain true to the object of faith, the question still remains as to why we should have faith in that, rather than something or someone else.... Otherwise theology will appear to rest on blind commitment. Asserting that it is made by the grace of God merely begs the question. How are we to distinguish between beliefs implanted in us by the working of the

that are utilised become unintelligible to the non-inhabitant of the Christian 'system'. This I take to be the problem with that theology which advocates the "commandeering" of language by theology, which would regard concepts such as, "freedom" and "personal identity" as having meanings that purely stem from Christian revelation.[109] This is to neglect the role that philosophy can play as a tool of conceptual clarification,[110] and is a sleight of hand in that theology employs extant terms to articulate Christian revelation, which are already embedded in networks of concepts at home in non-theological practices.[111] This is not to prevent God's action in revelation radically redefining and redirecting our understanding of what is truly personal.

Furthermore, it is contended that part, even if an indirect portion, of a justification or the critical controls which assess the validity of a *systematic* argument, should be based on grounds *extrinsic* (external) to internal (*intrinsic*) criteria of within systematic theology itself.[112] Such an approach attempts to extend the explanatory resonance of classical Systematic arguments, to the realm of shared human experience, based on the assumption that truth is exclusive and we live in a common world, in which truth claims should converge.[113] The success of science, for example, in explaining the nature of the physical universe, needs to be considered as part of the 'unity of knowledge' of which theology

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Holy Spirit, and those that merely appear to have been but are themselves the product of human corruption? .... Some process of discrimination between true and false beliefs is still necessary, and that would seem to be pre-eminently the role of reason." R. Trigg, *Rationality and Religion: Does Faith Need Reason?* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp.177-178.

[109] A proponent of this view may maintain that if Christian revelation is of a God who is "wholly other" and rescues God-talk from the dangers of anthropomorphic projection, then predetermined contexts of meaning cannot judge that which is revealed. As Alan J. Torrance advocates, "a commandeering grounded in a continuity established by God which is, therefore, *from* the divine *to* the human and which is to be found in that divine communion present with us in and through the human Jesus as the one who grounds, sustains and constitutes the Body of Christ." A.J. Torrance, *Persons in Communion. An Essay on Trinitarian Description and Human Participation* (Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1996), p.229.

[110] V. Brummer, *Speaking of a Personal God: an essay in philosophical theology* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), p.153.

[111] In order to be able to recognise revelation at all one requires some prior conception or understanding of what may constitute revelation. This position is compatible with the possibility of revelation introducing real novelty, whose content becomes a genuine epistemic control in our theology. It does not follow from this that one is able to deduce the content of revelation *a priori*, or even the weaker claim that Christian revelation is to be *expected* from purely "general considerations." See, Richard Swinburne, *Revelation: From Metaphor to Analogy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p.210; William J. Abraham "Revelation Reaffirmed," in *Divine Revelation*. ed. by P.D.L. Avis (London: Dartin, Longman & Todd, 1997), p.205.

[112] Christoph Schwöbel talks of the need for "*external coherence*": "the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is the revelation of the creator and that it is the inherent rationality of his creative action which makes the rational structure of the world and of the human mind possible." *God: Action and Revelation*], p.20.

[113] See Paul Helm, *The Divine Revelation. The Basic Issue* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1982); and Trigg, pp.178-186.

provides the answer to ultimate metaphysical questions, offering a 'higher level description'.[114] In this context, such a strategy is not strictly speaking that of philosophy of religion, which seeks to justify religious belief. It comes under the category of philosophical theology, although the distinction is often fluid, which is "the use of philosophy within theology, as distinct from when it functions as a preparatory justification for it."[115] As Alister McGrath writes: "Philosophical Theology is concerned with what might be called 'finding the common ground' between Christian faith and other areas of intellectual activity."[116] As such it can examine the co-inherence and validity of specific Christian doctrines. In its full-bodied form this involves an endorsement of the validity of the 'philosophy of religion' project, viz. the need for the justification of religious belief. This is perfectly consistent with a strong conception of the 'mystery of faith', namely, that what is called special revelation cannot be deduced from the world.[117] The place of any natural theology, which is not the subject of this thesis, should be consonant with this.[118] My contention is merely that revelation and "external" truth claims should struggle to be consistent with one another, without undermining the integrity of either, and with the proviso that all human knowledge is provisional and fallible.

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[114] Not to maintain such a "unity of knowledge" is to fall into, what C. F.H. Henry calls, using a term from George Orwell, "a double-truth theory." C.F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, Vol.I. (Waco: Word Books, 1976), p.233. Countering the Barthian-inspired point that as a result of sin we suffer noetic alienation and so require epistemic *metanoia* brought about by the Spirit, Henry, from a more traditional Reformed position responds: "If the noetic effects of the fall were totally and utterly damaging, thus making man incapable of thinking aright and immune to the rational validity of the basic categories of logic (e.g., the law of contradiction), then no rationally persuasive case could be mounted for or against anything whatever. There are but two ways of thinking - not regenerate and unregenerate, but valid and invalid." ibid., p.227.

[115] See David Brown, "Philosophical Theology", in *Blackwell's Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought.* ed. by A.E. McGrath (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p.434; *The Divine Trinity* (London: Duckworth, 1985), p.x.

[116] A.E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2nd Edition, 1997), p. 151.

[117] Colin Gunton argues that much philosophy makes claims that are inimical to the Christian concept of revelation: "Here we reach the chief problems, which can be said to be those of ontology and capacity. Most philosophy which is prior to, or impatient of, Kant's phemonalising of metaphysics, supposes some kind of ontological continuity between the human mind and the divine, however understood; and a corresponding intrinsic capacity to come into relation with it - what I have, after Tillich, described as ontological reason." C.E. Gunton, "Indispensable Opponent. The Relation of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion," *NZSTRP*, Vol. 38 no.3 (1996), p.299. This seems an unfortunate generalisation. Is the position of believing that one can make truth-claims in certain areas, and claim to possess provisional knowledge equivalent to "ontological continuity" with God? If this were the case the same brush would tar all forms of realist enquiry, such as science. For there to be "ontological continuity" philosophy would have to show that one could possess substantive knowledge of God independent of revelation. Traditional Natural theology has never made this claim. As Trigg says: "In other words, natural theology provides a case for thinking that, if there was a God, humans still need a further source of knowledge about the character of God.... Revelation is thus not a substitute for 'natural' reason. It is an answer to the question such reason produces." Trigg, p.185.

[118] Trigg, p.182. Terrence Penelhum argues for the renewed importance of this approach given the reality of modern pluralism. T. Penelhum, "Revelation and Philosophy," in *Divine Revelation.* ed. P.D.L. Avis, p.84.

The belief that any position will have certain ontological attachments or assumptions, need not lead us to the conclusion that any process of interaction or appropriation of more widely held knowledge claims will somehow prejudice Christian theology with alien concerns.[119] It is the case that arguments on particular topics can be detached from the most fundamental (metaphysical) intuitions, and agreement might be possible because of consensus at a lower level of intuitions. For example, Harry Frankfurt is not a Christian, however, one might agree with parts of his analysis of freedom. One might favour his conception of freedom over and above that of Jean-Paul Sartre's. One might agree with his development of the concept of first and second order desires and volitions as a useful framework to talk practically about freedom. A theologian will then wish to apply and adapt such argumentation to the theological realm. The final use or appropriation of such concepts depends upon ultimate metaphysical intuitions and beliefs, but that does not mean that one can sensibly engage with lower level argumentation without either irreparable contamination from the outset by higher order beliefs, or entailing them. It is this lower order possibility of agreement that grounds the basis of translation and conversation.

II.02) Strategy 2: The Use of Models.

The use of metaphors to describe the Holy Spirit and the Divine-human relationship is rooted in Christian Scripture and subsequently employed within the tradition.[120] In the thesis this tradition will be utilised by using model theory to further our enquiry into the Divine-human relationship in Christian metamorphosis. The move from metaphors to models mirrors the move towards second-order reflection in theology. According to Ian Barbour models are simply metaphors that have been developed methodically: "a metaphor is used only momentarily, whereas a model is used in a sustained and systematic fashion."[121] Vincent Brummer terms the use of such systematically developed models, *conceptual models*.[122] Models are an appropriate methodological tool in both theology and other disciplines such as science, because they give cognitive access to realities beyond

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[119] Gunton in holding that philosophy is the "indispensible opponent" of systematic theology seems to envisage the relationship in adversarial mode, as two competing advocates. "Indispensable Opponents", p.305.

[120] For a summary of such metaphors used of the Spirit, both personal and non-personal, see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life. A Universal Affirmation* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1992), pp.269-289.

[121] I.G. Barbour, *Myths, Models and Paradigms* (London: SCM Press, 1974), p.16.

[122] *Speaking of a Personal God*, p.60.

our first order means of acquiring knowledge about the world. Nelson Goodman understands metaphors as involving a "transfer of schema", referring to schema as a complex or "family" of labels.

> When a metaphor is employed...a schema, 'a set of terms, of alternative labels, is transported' from its customary realm to a new realm.... inviting the exploration of the new realm in terms of the entities, structures and relationships of the realm from which they are borrowed.[123]

Using Rom Harre's distinction between the *source* of a model (what the model is founded upon) and its *subject* (what the model represents), J. M. Soskice holds that the type of models which are of interest to theology are paramorphic models where source and subject are separate.[124] In the case of paramorphic models, there is rupture, novelty, creativity, and conflict, what Goodman refers to as "attraction as well as resistance."[125] There are limits to this transfer, and the success of a particular metaphor depends upon the ability of the user to recognise, at least to some extent, the limits and boundaries of the transfer.[126] Mary Hesse talks of this in terms of the need to identify the *negative* analogies and *positive* analogies of the model,[127] where a transfer of schema does or does not take place. Furthermore, models are not intended to be exhaustive or infallible.[128]

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[123] This is Iris M. Yob's description of Goodman's approach in her, "Religious Metaphor and Scientific Model: Grounds for Comparison", *Religious Studies*, Vol.28 (1992), p.477.

[124] J.M. Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1985).

[125] Yob, p.482.

[126] Sallie McFague writes, metaphorical statements "always contain the whisper, 'it is and is not.'" S. McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1982), p.13.

[127] According to Hesse, there are not only positive and negative analogies involved in a model, but also what she calls *neutral* analogies: viz. schema from the *source* of the model which have not yet been transferred to the *subject* of the model, because they have either been seen to date as irrelevant or secondary features, or simply have not been discovered or been drawn to the attention of the researcher. This would constitute a reason for considering models to have potentially long lives as methodological tools.

[128] Another important issue in model theory is the debate as to whether models are in fact dispensable. Those who argue that models are dispensable, hold that once the positive and negative features of the underlying analogy have been specified, the model has fulfilled its purpose and can only have a pedagogical function in the future. J. M. Soskice, on the other hand, argues that a theory that can be generated without a model is impotent. Abstract calculi and mathematical logic cannot move a theory forward unless there is some bridge with experience and natural events, a role which metaphors fulfil. Further, metaphors and models have an open-ended nature, which allows them to have a continued power of suggestion and a capacity to unfold over the long term, which is crucial in theory development. If we accept these arguments we should also be able to accept Soskice's conclusion that: "The model or analogue forms the living part of the theory, the cutting edge of its projective capacity and, hence, is indispensable for explanatory and predictive purposes." Soskice, p.115.

II.020I) Arriving at the *Generating Hypothesis.*

The initial *generating hypothesis*[129] of my thesis is supported by a premise that is well established in Christian theology:

α) God is a personal being. This is part of "background theory" stemming from the character of God testified to by the Incarnation, and represents an established and accepted Christian truth claim. In this thesis this premise will be assumed. From this premise a second ensues:

β) If God is personal and given our knowledge of His actions, He will be involved in the process of *metamorphosis* in a personal manner. This premise is derived from "background theory," to wit, the character and actions of God as testified to in the Incarnation, and in subsequent Christian experience. It is not my intention to argue for the strict entailment of premise β from premise α, rather the point is that premise α and β set up the *key generating hypothesis*:

1*) If God's action in relation to His human creatures is personal, then, we have prior reasons, alongside the use of existing metaphors *given* in Scripture, for the hypothesis that the most suitable model of Divine-human relation in Christian *metamorphosis* is a Personalist one, by which is meant a model based on interpersonal human relationships as the source.[130] The hypothesis sets out to examine whether a Personalist model provides the greatest explanatory force in relation to the subject matter of the *generating question*, viz. the compatibility of Christian *metamorphosis* with human freedom and personal identity. The key *generating hypothesis* will be examined in Chapter 3 and 4.

Identifying the extent of the "transfer of schema," the sorting out of the positive and negative features of the Personalist model, and purging of what is irrelevant and detrimental, will be undertaken in Chapter 3 (A Personalist Model) and 4 ("Negative Analogies of the Personalist Model"). The Personalist Model may be judged by, what

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[129] Again this term is taken from the philosophy of science (Lamb, ch.III). From the *generating question* a process of abduction or retroduction takes place in which a promising and relevant hypothesis or set of hypotheses are arrived at by credible conjecture which may be moulded by accumulated knowledge to date and research and background theory.

[130] If one is to claim that God is personal and that human relationships can be personal in an analogous sense, then, the conditions of human interpersonal relationships may be used in an analogical way to explicate the Divine-human relationship. This can only be considered to be an imposition of false concerns (often referred to as *a priori* concepts) upon the knowledge of revelation if the model is not truly interactive, that is, if it seeks to make truth claims which do not correspond with the epistemological sources of Christianity or seek to be governed by them.

Christoph Schwoebel has called, the criteria of *adequacy*.[131] The criterion of adequacy refers to the fit between of the model with Scripture, which is in turn witnesses to the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. In addition, *adequacy* is judged by conformity of the model with Christian tradition.[132] As regards Christian tradition, this thesis will not attempt to engage comprehensively with the entire discussion of matters similar in character to the subject matter of this thesis throughout the history of Christian theology, for example, the grace-nature-freedom debate. My dialogue partners from the Christian tradition will thus be selected on the grounds of direct relevance to the construction of the Personalist Model or other models under examination.

A comparison with competing models will be undertaken in Chapter 6 ("Impersonal Models: The need for complementary models). Such a strategy is evident in the application of model theory to contemporary science. Quantum Theory has provided many examples of patterns of behaviour that can only be explained by using two or more models, which have the same referent. Wave-particle duality of the quantum atom is such an example. Although no unified model can be given, the use of two models can not be accused of falling into the trap of a formal contradiction, because the positive analogies of both do not conflict as they bring out an aspect of the phenomenon in question, and the negative features relate to the positive features of the other model.[133] This led Niels Bohr to articulate the so called "complementarity principle". Einstein found this principle difficult to reconcile with what he considered was a demand of scientific method, namely, conceptual unity. For Bohr the complementary models were demanded by the need to explain the behaviour of light and matter, and had only *instrumental* value.[134]

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[131] *God: Action and Revelation*, pp.17-21.

[132] This is similar to Vincent Brummer's four criteria for selecting adequate theological models. "Consonance with tradition" refers to concordance with Scripture and the cumulative Christian tradition, the recognition that theology is a "co-operative enterprise." *Speaking of a Personal God*, p.23.

[133] Alistair McGrath explains the point in this way: "The fundamental principle is that the behavior of certain entities can be completely described by using either one of two mutually exclusive 'classic' models. One aspect of its behavior may be described using model A, others with model B; yet there is no aspect of its behavior which allows or requires *both* A *and* model B to be true; nor are there grounds for saying that the entity in question 'is' A or 'is' B or 'is' A and B." A.E. McGrath, *The Foundations of Dialogue in Science and Religion* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1998) p.197.

[134] See H. Krips, *The Metaphysics of Quantum Theory*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp.22-4; H. Folse, *The Philosophy of Niels Bohr: The Framework of Complementarity* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1985), p.152ff. McGrath holds that Bohr maintained "a non-realist approach to the specific models" McGrath, p.204. McGrath then goes on to apply this thinking to the "two natures" of Christ, to Christology. Does McGrath wish to carry over Bohr's "instrumentalism" or non-realism to the Christological terms "human" and "Divine"? He seems prepared to countenance it when he concludes: "A number of modern writers have

Christian Scripture teems with a variety of metaphors, so it would be hardly surprising if a multi-model approach to the *generating question* of the thesis was found to be necessary. Ian Ramsey pointed out a long time ago that the Christian conception of God was constructed by the interaction of different models, which composed a cumulative picture of God.[135] Moreover, if models are not seen as exhaustive, but rather as analogical, always containing negative analogies, it should not cause great consternation if models are required to complement one another. However, any two complementary models should not formally contradict each other, for the positive features of each model attempts to explain an aspect of the *explanandum* which the other has failed to embrace.

II.03) Strategy 3: Systematic Contextualisation.

There are at least two reasons for wishing to employ a third methodological strategy in this thesis. As we have seen, both Brummer and Schwoebel point to the importance of a criterion of coherence, suggesting that the primary model adopted be compatible and coherent with the larger canvass of Christian doctrine.[136] The second reason is more immediate to the very nature of models themselves. If with any model there are *negative* and *neutral* analogies, then, some explanation should be attempted as to why the model does not function in a positive way in these areas in relation to the *subject* of the model. The *negative* import of these analogies may be *qualified* by showing why it is one would not expect the model to function in a positive manner, given the nature of its subject.[137]

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argued that it is not necessary to draw such ontological conclusions (which may reflect a particular interest in ontology in the patristic period); it is quite possible to rest content with the assertion that Jesus behaves in divine and human ways" ibid., p.205. However, if Jesus is to have the soteriological significance that Christians suppose, and if the concept of the Incarnation is to have any weight, then christological propositions must have ontological import. The Christian Creeds do not just claim that Jesus *behaved* as if He were Divine, but that He was Divine, in fact, specifically the Son of the Father.

[135] I.T. Ramsey, *Christian Discourse: Some Logical Explorations*, 1965.

[136] As Gabriel Fackre remarks, "what makes a 'systematics' is: *comprehensiveness*, the coverage of the standard places of Christian teaching; *coherence*, a demonstration of the topics' interrelationships; and *contextuality*, the interpretation of the sweep of doctrine in terms of current issues and idiom." Fackre, "The Revival of Systematic Theology", *Interpretation* 49 (1995), p.230.

[137] Nicholas Rescher writes on this: "A painting or piece of architecture - any good design - must combine a variety of potentially conflicting elements in the conjoining synthesis of a cooperative harmony, and this sort of rational unification is exactly what a *system* is all about." N. Rescher, *Cognitive Systematization: A Systems Theoretic Approach to a Coherentist Theory of Knowledge* (Totowa: N.J. Rowman and Littlefield, 1979), p.14. One might add that there are degrees of "rational unification" and "cognitive systematization," which will be dependent upon the nature of one's object of knowledge.

"Systematic contextualisation" essentially means placing the *generating question* and the *generating hypothesis* in the context of other loci of Christian doctrine, hence adopting a non-linear coherence theory of justification.[138] Such a procedure may also qualify the import of the negative analogies of the primary model and thereby, help to offer further explanation, even if this were of a negative kind, viz. providing reasons why the question cannot be fully answered. The methodological strategy of Systematic contextualisation commences in Chapter 5 which relates the *generating question* to Christian conceptions of freedom, agency and sin. Chapter 7 will set the question in the context of the issue of human intersubjectivity and the doctrines of General Concurrence and Providence. The Systematic context will also be furthered in Chapter 8, in relation to the doctrine of revelation, as the framework of Divine grace, and the Covenant as the condition of loving personal relations between God and humankind.

III.) Second Prolegomena: Dealing with False-Starters and Initial Queries.

III.01) Theological Determinism.

Is Theological Determinism incompatible with the approach adopted in this thesis? I take *Hard* Theological Determinism to be the view that holds that God determines everything that happens, as Acts 2.23 tells us, all events determined according to "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Theological Determinism is also addressed, as it is in much contemporary philosophy of religion,[139] in terms of God's perfect foreknowledge about the universe, which is taken to mean that only the states of affairs that He knows will occur can occur. According to the *Hard* Theological Determinist human freedom is strongly determined by the Divine, hence seen by some as an illusion, with evil being an instrumental part of God's plan. In contrast, *Soft* Theological Determinism or Theological Compatibilism is traditionally the view that God as the first cause determines the created order, but that this is not incompatible with genuine human freedom, as God can also determine the *mode* in which events happen, viz. He may determine that human actions are free. Such thinking would, for example, underlie Thomas Aquinas' distinction between

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[138] Again, Rescher describes the search for coherence as a "network model": "This network model sees a cognitive system as a family of interrelated theses, not necessarily arranged in a ***hierarchical*** arrangement (as with an axiomatic system), but rather linked among one another by an *interlacing network* of connections." ibid., p. 44

[139] For survey articles on this subject see, T.P. Flint, "Providence and Predestination," in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. eds. by P.L. Quinn and C. Taliaferro. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 569 - 576; and Linda Zagzebski, "Foreknowledge and Human Freedom", pp. 291 - 298.

primary and secondary causation, which we shall return to in Chapter 7. Equally, a *Soft* Theological Compatibilist may suggest that although God has overall determining control over the order of creation, human beings have *local* or "proximate control" in relation to their own acts.[140] Luther makes a similar distinction by distinguishing between "necessity of immutability" and "compulsion," and maintaining spontaneous and voluntary nature of human action alongside Divine providential governance.[141]

How do these two positions stand in relation to the approach adopted in this thesis? William Hasker argues that "Calvinism," a category that lumps together *hard* and *soft* theological determinism, is deficient in that it fails to explain adequately the phenomenon of "divine-human dialogue" and also the problem of evil.[142] Let us consider the first claim, as it has specific relevance to the *generating hypothesis* of this thesis, namely, that a Personalist model will provide the best explanation in relation to the Spirit-human relation. William Alston makes the following points concerning Divine-human dialogue:

> Dialogue requires two independent participants, neither of which wholly controls the responses of the other.... If there is to be genuine communication, each participant must be over against another participant that is responsible for one end of exchange. Otherwise I am as misguided in regarding it as genuine communication as I would be in eagerly looking forward to receiving a letter I wrote to myself.[143]

Alston goes on to provide us with a good example of his point:

> Consider a 'conversation' between hypnotist and subject, in which the latter is doing nothing but carrying out post-hypnotic suggestions.... Here the one party, the hypnotist, really is effectively deciding what the other says, and the other is as complicated a being, in fact *is* a human being. Here we have as close an analogy to divine omnidetermination as we are likely to find, and the verdict, I suppose, would be clear. This is a charade, not a genuine case of communication.[144]

What Alston's case shows is that Divine-human dialogue is incompatible with "omnidetermination," that is, *Hard* Theological Determinism. If God determines

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[140] This suggestion is outlined in T.P. Flint, "Providence and Predestination," pp.572. Some Theological Compatibilist may question whether such a position is really a species of determinism. On the other hand, stronger forms of theological determinism have to show that they do not collapse into *Hard* Theological Determinism.

[141] Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will*, trans. J.I. Packer and O.R. Johnston. (Grand Rapids, Fleming H. Revell, 1957), II (viii) ["Of the spontaneity of necessitated acts"], pp. 102- 4.

[142] W. Hasker, "Providence and Evil," *Religious Studies,* Vol. 28 (1992), pp.91-105.

[143] W. P. Alston"Divine-Human Dialogue and the Nature of God," *Faith and Philosophy*, Vol.2, 1985, p.8.

[144] ibid., pp.9.

everything in a strong sense the key features of a Personalist model, such as, exchange, reciprocal identification, receptivity, response, are all emptied of any intrinsic efficacy and meaning. Indeed, the *generating question* of this thesis becomes a gaping non-question. For this reason the *generating hypothesis* of this thesis *excludes* Hard Theological Determinism.[145]

Is *Soft* Theological Determinism also excluded? It depends how soft is *soft*. Theological Compatibilism may not be excluded if it is prepared to give the human agent space for self-determination within the larger determination of God, or in other words, to grant human agents *local* or *proximate* freedom/control. Let us relate these issues to the distinction within Catholic theology between *general*, God's action in conserving creation and *special concurrence*, God's special action within history.[146] Soft Theological Determinism may hold that God determines in a general way through the act of creation and conservation, but that *special concurrence* is not generally determining, but requires the free interaction of human creatures, the domain of local/prximate control. *Hard* Theological Determinism has to explain the apparent anomaly in its system, namely, that despite the reality of hard determinism, God still requires His Spirit to engage in *special* actions to bring about the salvation of the elect. As was stated in my discussion of the concept of freedom in sub-section I.0103), this thesis does not aim to settle the debate between compatibilists and incompatibilists, and hopes that its substantive claims may be acceptable to versions of either position.

III.02) Community and Individual.

Another source of objection to the very way in which I have set up the *generating question* may come from those who would reject the focus on the individual person in considering the action of the Spirit. Rather, this objector might maintain that the Spirit is given to and operates within the Christian *community*; therefore, the *generating question* is wrongheaded from the start. I argue in *Appendix 1*, that a false 'either/or' appears to have

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[145] I shall leave the pursuit of the other prong of Hasker's critique of "Calvinism", to wit, that it is unable to show that God is opposed to evil as strongly as Scripture claims Him to be. See: Hasker, pp.93-94; J.S. Feinberg, *Theologies and Evil* (Washington, D.C.: University of America Press, 1979). For a general critique of Theological Determinism from a Libertarian position see, W.S. Anglin, *Free Will and the Christian Faith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

[146] See, A.J. Benedetto, "Divine Concurrence," in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol.IV (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967), pp.125-7.

been constructed by this objection: the community versus the individual. The Scriptural witness shows that when the Spirit bestows life and power it does so at an individual and community level, and the two are not set-up in contradistinction.

III.03) Paradox, Apophaticism and the Agnostic Option.

In *God Was In Christ*, D. M. Baillie argues that at the heart of theology are irreducible *paradoxes*. Thus, he writes of the Incarnation:

> It is indeed the central paradox: how can the same life be explained as a completely human life in the continuum of history and as the life of God Himself? But there is similar paradox whenever in Christian thought we introduce God as the ultimate source of anything in our experience: He comes in, as it were, on the vertical line from the eternal world (*'senkrecht von oben'*) to touch the horizontal line on which we inevitably have another explanation in empirical terms. And the mystery of the Incarnation is the climax of all the Christian paradoxes. They all point to it, they all have an organic connection with it, and indeed they are all revealed by it.[147]

This strategy seems to represent an apophatic turn, the mystery of the way of God to His creatures. Equally, as the "paradox of Grace", as Baillie calls it, has existential import, it becomes a means of illuminating the Incarnation. He concludes:

> If then Christ can be thus regarded as in some sense the prototype of the Christian life, may we not find a feeble analogue of the incarnate life in the experience of those who are His 'many brethren,' and particularly in the central paradox of their experience: 'Not I, but the grace of God'? If this confession is true of the little broken fragments of good that are in our lives - if these must be described on the one hand as human achievements, and yet on the other hand, and in a deeper and prior sense, as *not* human achievements but things actually wrought by God - is it not the same *type* of paradox, taken at the absolute degree, that covers the whole ground of the life of Christ, of which we say that it was the life of a man and yet also, in a deeper and prior sense, the very life of God incarnate?[148]

Setting aside the adequacy of this approach in Christology,[149] and the slightly Gnostic overtones, Baillie's reflections challenge the legitimacy of seeking to answer the

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[147] D. M. Baillie, *God was in Christ: An Essay on Incarnation and Atonement* (London: Faber & Faber ltd., 1947), p.110.

[148] ibid., p.129.

[149] I certainly think that Baillie's systematic comparison of grace and Christology is insightful. It seems quite appropriate that if we are, to use the Pauline phrase, to "take on the mind of Christ," then, the pattern of His life will in some way be the pattern of ours. Whether Baillie's strategy adequately deals with the central Christological issues is another question. For example, how does Baillie intend to distinguish a Christian believer (an "adopted son") from Jesus Christ (*the* Son of God)? Is Baillie's analogy really strong enough to do justice to the Chalcedonian belief that the *subject*, the "who," of Jesus Christ is the eternal Son? The reason why Jesus' actions were good is not simply because Jesus was in a faith-relationship with God, who

generating question of my thesis. Have I not posed and set out to answer a question about which one ought to settle, *a priori*, for a paradox, as a result of the very nature of Christian revelation and theology? Does the *generating question* seek an answer where "there is no solution which is rationally coherent"?[150] This position may be described as agnosticism in relation to the *generating question*.[151] Robert Jenson also appears to agree with this position, as part of his rejection of an Augustinian-inspired theology of "grace":

> For one thing, it may well be doubted that there is any vantage from which thus to observe the entities God and creature, so as to be able to describe the process between them.[152]

There are problems with this position. First, Baillie's own way of constructing the position is problematic, for it appears to rather uncritically appropriate the epistemology of Martin Buber and the, so-called, Dialogical Personalists.

> The reason why the element of paradox comes into all religious thought and statement is because God cannot be comprehended in any human words or in any of the categories of our finite thought. God can be known only in a direct personal relationship, an 'I-and-Thou' intercourse...God cannot be legitimately 'objectified.'[153]

Many have criticised the fallacy of starkly opposing, what is called, knowledge by *acquaintance* and knowledge by *description*.[154] Secondly, Baillie fails to draw a sharp

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bestowed the capacity to do good action, but that Jesus *was*, in some sense, God. It is not merely the case that "the divine is always prevenient"(ibid., p.130), but that Jesus' Divinity is a result of the *prevenient* Logos becoming man.

[150] John McIntyre adopts Baillie's position on the paradox of grace: "The theme is universally acknowledged, but what is not so often accepted is that there is no way round the apparent contradiction, no dissolution of the paradox." J. McIntyre, *The Shape of Pneumatology: Studies in the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1997), p. 247, cf. p. 190. So too does the Anglican Leonard Hodgson: "Since our growth into existence as persons is one of those ongoing processes of scientifically knowable change of which we cannot expect to be able to get a clear picture or logical definition of cross-sections, the same is true of the changing gradations in God's modes of relationship to us. All we can say is that God is personally at work in us promoting our growth in freedom into the persons that He wills us to be." L. Hodgson, *For Faith and Freedom.* The Gifford Lectures, 1955-1957 (London: SCM Press, 1968), p.155.

[151] McIntyre uses the term agnosticism: "At this point I find a form of agnosticism not unattractive and not unholy." McIntyre, p.186.

[152] He continues: "And be that as it may, the attempt to think from such a vantage has created in Western theology an alienation of the third article, a transformation of the biblical discourse about God's Spirit into a stipulation of method for our spirituality. That is, the traditional doctrine of 'grace' is a works-righteous *structure* lodged at the heart of the chief theological concern and achievement of the Western church." Jenson, p.128. One may wish to ask Jenson if we ever should hope for a transcendent vantage point even in the eschaton?

[153] Baillie, p.108.

[154] The point is that knowing by acquaintance usually involves knowledge by description. As David Haymes argues: "I could not meet or encounter anyone except on the basis of what I *take him to be* and what I observe him to be *doing* or *judge* him to be thinking.... The notion of encounter does not afford us a way of avoiding the question of how we know that some things are true about God and His dealings with us." D. Haymes, *The Concept of the Knowledge of God* (London: Macmillan, 1988). See also: S.T. Katz, "Dialogue

enough distinction between a *paradox* and a *contradiction*. It is precisely part of the theological endeavour to show that theological paradoxes are not contradictions, but only *apparent* contradictions.[155] Baillie appears to hold, following Sergius Bulgakov, that paradoxical Christian concepts are not contradictions because at an existential level they are resolved through lived experience,[156] it is only when we attempt to tackle them conceptually, to "objectify" them, that "all our judgements are somehow falsified."[157] The claim of contradiction is defeated at an existential level, so that despite the fact that "every good thing he does somehow is not wrought by himself but by God," yet, "Never is human action more truly and fully personal, never does the agent feel more perfectly free, than in those moments of which he can say as a Christian that whatever good was in them was not his but God's."[158] I wonder if the experience is really so stark. The real point is that Baillie again draws a too rigid and unhelpful distinction between lived experience and human explanation. Is it actually the case, as Baillie assumes, that Christians experience without any problem virtuous action, or the creation of a wonderful piece of artwork, say, as "Not I but the grace of God"? The artist has a strong sense of her own personal involvement in the act of creativity and of the final piece of art as deeply connected to her sense of identity. Equally a virtuous action requires effort and a certain disposition of the person, which has developed over a number of years. To appeal to the level of human experience, as Baillie does, hardly produces the simple supportive verdict that he desires. Even if

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and Revelation in the Thought of Martin Buber," *Religious Studies*, Vol.14 (1978), pp. 57-68; "Martin Buber's Epistemology: A Critical Appraisal," *International Philosophy Quarterly*, Vol.21 (1981), pp.133-158.

[155] Indeed, one may say that the methodology of model theory utilises paradox in drawing an analogy between the source and subject of a model. It may not be literally true that "God is a person," hence the paradox. Yet one may also derive *negative* and *positive* analogies, whose propositional content is not paradoxical. A contradiction invalidates the rationality of a belief, and a counter-intuition can be dispensed with once the truth of the matter is discovered, but a paradox, again rather like a long-lasting model or metaphor, endures even after clarification or an initial resolution, for the paradox is required to gain illumination into the matter. The *negative* and *positive* analogies of the paradox, "God is a person," may be reduced to a series of propositions, but that does not eliminate the puzzlement that is experienced in attempting to conceive of a reality, radically different from any categorical object of our experience, for which these propositions are true. See John Wisdom, *Paradox and Discovery* (New York: Blackwell, 1965); Ian T. Ramsey, "Paradox in Religion," in *Christian Empiricism*, ed. by J.H. Gill (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974); Mary A. Stenger, "The Significance of Paradox for Theological Verification: Difficulties and Possibilities," *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion*, Vol.14, No.3 (1983), pp.172 - 182

[156] This seems to me what Baillie is saying when he writes: "the higher truth [of the 'direct faith-relationship'] which reconciles them [the paradoxes of Christian theology] cannot be expressed in words, though it is experienced and lived in the 'I-and-Thou' relationship of faith towards God." Baillie, p.109. The contention seems to be that the paradoxes of Christian theology are not really paradoxes at all, certainly at the "higher level", but only appear so at the "lower level" of Christian explanation.

[157] ibid., p.109.

[158] ibid., p.114.

people were prepared to "live with" the paradox at the level of their personal lives, that is no reason to claim there is in fact either no paradox at the heart of the matter, or that it should not be addressed at a cognitive level.

Finally, the view of theology that may be said to lie behind Baillie's remarks has a tendency towards theological resignation, if much explanation of Christian doctrine is *a priori* to be ruled as paradoxical. This does not seem to be in line with the Anselmian view of theology as always pressing onwards, "faith seeking understanding." There are limits of the comprehensiveness of Christian knowledge: we can never have full knowledge of the nature of God. The Spirit-believer relationship, however, is not *solely* about the nature of God. It is about God as He relates to *us*, how God continues to impinge upon our world, which is, of course, His world. It does seem that we can have substantive knowledge, all be it provisional knowledge, about our selves and our world, even if we may not know our true *telos* independent of revelation. We have, for example, common intuitions concerning some of the conditions of human freedom and personal identity that hold in our experience. We have knowledge of how personal relationships function, their basic dynamic and conditions. On top of this, we have substantial knowledge of God as given in revelation and consequently affirmed in Christian experience. These are the grounds to press on theologically, in the endeavour of "faith seeking understanding." This may not give us the vantage point that Jenson talks of, a transcendent vantage point, but it gives us some kind of viewing point. Nonetheless, Baillie has made a cautionary point, that insofar as the nature of God is not to be fully grasped, and is of a quite different order to any other reality we encounter, indeed is the very ground of our being, then, the intent of eradicating all paradox appears naive and overconfident. As Austin Farrer would say, we can never as a result examine the *causal joint* of the God-human relationship, and so can never describe it in fully precise terms. We may not eradicate paradox, we may end with paradox, but we should not assume it.

It might be relevant at this point to draw a comparison with Kant's thought. Kant was in one sense quite agnostic; he did not wish to "venture with speculative reason beyond the limits of experience."[159] His adoption of a *transcendental* method sought the necessary conditions of the very possibility of experience. The method consists in ascertaining

various matters of experience that he took to be undeniable, and then asking what they necessarily presuppose. In my methodology I am also assuming certain experiences as a valid starting point: the experience of Christian revelation and the claims it makes, our intuitions concerning human freedom and identity. Given this, a provisional knowledge of who we are and the testimony regarding who God is and His actions in the world, we might employ Kant's transcendental method to ask what the conditions of the very possibility of Christian *metamorphosis* are. Karl Rahner has used such a methodology in relation to our reception of revelation in his book *Hearer of the Word*. This thesis may be considered as an attempt to offer the basic conditions or presuppositions of the Spirit-human relationship in Christian *metamorphosis*, which may be deduced from our initial assumptions.

III.04) A Trinitarian Methodology.

Recent theology has witnessed a veritable renaissance in trinitarian theology. Some theologians have been interested in developing a trinitarian theology[160] which extends beyond a mere discussion of the specific doctrine, and moves towards becoming "all-inclusive, referring to the whole network of Christian doctrine elaborated in a trinitarian way," and which is "something approaching a methodological principle for the whole systematic agenda".[161] Trinitarian theology, it is held, constitutes a structural principle for theology, so that the Trinity is applied analogically across the subject matter of theology. One moves from an ontology of God to a general ontology of (new) creation.[162] In this strain, Colin Gunton has revived and re-directed the Ancient Greek and Mediaeval concept of *transcendentalia* (transcendentals), to refer to those things which can be predicated of all being, both personal and non-personal, given God's role as Creator of the world.[163]

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[159] Immaneul Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (London: Manmillan, 1978), p.26.
[160] See: Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian* and *The One, the Three and the Many*; Christoph Schwöbel & C. E. Gunton, eds., *Persons, Divine and Human* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991); C. Schwöbel, ed., *Trinitarian Theology Today: Essays on divine being and act* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995); A. J. Torrance (1996); John Zizioulas, "Human Capacity and human incapacity: a theological exploration of personhood", *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol.28, No.5 (1975), pp.401-447; *Being as Communion*.
[161] Alistair I. McFadyen, "The Trinity and Human Individuality. The Condition of Relevance," *Theology* Vol. 95 (1992), p. 10 n.1.
[162] The analogy, which is applied by many of these writers, is the *analogia relationis*.
[163] "They are not then the 'forms through which being displays itself,' because that might suggest a priority of 'being' over God, but notions which can be predicated of all being by virtue of the fact that God is creator and the world is creation." Gunton *The Promise of Trinitarian*, pp. 136-7.

There are three transcendentals which reflect the trinitarian being of God: perichoresis, substantiality and relationality.[164]

> I am arguing for a doctrine of analogy, of an understanding of the being of the created world by analogy with the being of God, which affirms rather than calls in question the reality of the many. The world may be understood as a universe of interrelated substantial particulars, because God its creator may in the first place be so conceived. [165]

I have argued elsewhere that the limits of such a trinitarian project have not been sufficiently well drawn.[166] Setting these general concerns to one side, let us consider the possibility of an application of a trinitarian analogy to the subject matter of our thesis. There are two grounds for thinking this a plausible avenue. First, John's Gospel clearly draws some kind of comparison between, what might be called, trinitarian indwelling and the Spirit's indwelling of the believer. In the "Farewell Discourses" the concept is first used of the indwelling (*menein*) of Father and Son (Jn.14.9-14), which is intra-trinitarian indwelling. It is only then used in relation to the Spirit's indwelling of the believer (Jn. 14.17).[167] Then, at the third level the unity of believers also mirrors the 'abiding in,' 'remaining in,' or 'residing in' of the Father and the Son.[168] A comparison clearly operates between these three levels.[169] What is critical here is to determine the nature of the comparison being made. Leon Morris comments on these verses, "This does not mean that the unity between the Father and the Son is the same as that between believers and God, but it does mean that there is an analogy."[170] Certainly interpretations in terms of mystical

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[164] ibid., pp.129-141.
[165] ibid., p.15.
[166] Fermer, pp. 158 – 186.
[167] R.E. Brown comments on the last verse: "*since he remains with you.* Again this is not really a reason or cause: the indwelling and recognition are coordinate. As Bengel has put it: the lack of recognition rules out indwelling, while indwelling is the basis of recognition." Brown, *(XIII-XXI)*, p. 639.
[168] John 17.21-23.
[169] R.E. Brown describes this in terms of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of Johannine statements about unity: "The unity involves the relation of the believers to the Father and the Son (vertical) and the relation of the believers among themselves." Brown (XIII-XXI), p.776. He goes on to describe the nature of this unity in the following manner: "Some type of vital, organic unity seems to be demanded by the fact that the relationship of Father and Son is held up as the model of unity. The Father-Son relationship involves more than moral union; the two are related because the Father gives life to the Son (vi 57). Similarly the Christians are one with one another and with the Father and the Son because they have received of this life. The fact that unity has to be visible enough to challenge the world to believe in Jesus (21, 23) seems to militate against a purely spiritual union." ibid..
[170] Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), p. 649.

absorption can be ruled out.[171] Moreover, it is not clear that the language of 'indwelling' or 'remaining in' is equivalent to that of incorporation, which is Pauline in origin and appears to be a stronger conception of inclusion. From the later perspective of the Church's trinitarian formulations of the faith, it is clear that whatever the analogy may be, one clear disanalogy is the fact that the three *hypostaseis* of the Trinity are traditionally described as one being or one essence (*mia ousia*).

Those who argue for a form of "Social trinitarianism", as for example David Brown does, may hold that the Trinity is to be conceived of as a "divine society": one "corporate personality", one "self-consciousness and three conscious persons."[172] If one were able to accept such accounts, this may appear to open the door for the re-assertion of the claim that intra-trinitarian and Divine-human indwelling are not really so different after all. However, the disanalogy with these kind of sociological examples of human corporate identity, is that within such a corporate understanding of self-consciousness the society or community is made up of distinct, individual *beings*, whereas in the case of the Trinity, God is one being. The 'corporate' nature of the Trinity is ontological, whereas Brown's 'analogy' is social and functional.[173] It is noteworthy that key parts of the mystical tradition, which Brown wishes to enlist on his side, are very careful to make the distinction between the *ontological* unity of God and the unity of the Divine and human, which is a unity of love and will, "a communion of wills and the agreement in charity".[174]

There is another angle from which this trinitarian methodology may be pursued, and that is the Spirit's relationship with Jesus of Nazareth, the God-man, in acting as the paradigm

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[171] In commenting on John 14.10, Barnabas Lindars excludes a mystical interpretation: "This is excluded by the fact that the context is not at all concerned with the inner life of Jesus." B. Lindars, *The New Century Bible Commentary: The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972).pp. 474. On 14:23, the Father and the Son making their home with the believer, Lindars comments: "It must, then, be an interior apprehension of Jesus and the Father in the hearts of those who love Jesus. This can hardly be mystical experience of an esoteric kind, which would not be accessible to all. It is more likely to be something akin to the Pauline concept of being 'in Christ', a faith-union maintained by the imagination and the will." ibid., p. 483.

[172] D. Brown, "Trinitarian Personhood and Individuality," in R.J. Feenstra and C. Plantinga, eds., *Trinity, Incarnation and Atonement* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), pp.48-75.

[173] ibid., pp. 72-3.

[174] For example, Bernard of Clairvaux writes: "there must be at least two wills for there to be agreement, and two essences for there to be combining or uniting in agreement. There are none of these things in the Father and the Son since they have neither two essences nor two wills." St. Bernard of Clairvaux, "Sermons on the Song of Songs," 71.9 in *Bernard of Clairvaux: selected writings*, trans. by G.R. Evans (Mahnah, NJ.: Paulist Press, 1987).

case for explicating Divine-human indwelling.[175] Let us set to one side the controversial subject of, what is called in contemporary theology, a "Spirit-Christology," which at its worst threatens the very doctrine of the Trinity itself. Rather, the above proposal seems to face immediate difficulties in relation to the doctrine of the Incarnation. If Jesus is not merely a human being, but also Divine, He cannot without qualification act as the exemplar of Divine-human indwelling. Thomas Weinandy explicates the position of Chalcedon on this point:

> Jesus is a full human person in the contemporary sense, that is, possessing a human self-consciousness, with all its concomitant attributes, such as freedom. Jesus possesses a human 'I'. What the Incarnation demands, and the Councils have defined and the tradition has articulated, is that the identity (the who) of this human 'I' be the eternal Son. .... If the subject (the who) of the human 'I' is not the divine Son, then Jesus differs from us in his relationship to God only in degree and not in kind.[176]

The last sentence is crucial, there is a difference *in kind* between the incarnate Jesus and the rest of humanity: both parties share their humanity but are related to God differently. Jesus as the Divine Logos does not need to undergo the process of *metanoia*, although His human awareness grows in recognition of His Divine mission. Although Jesus is not immune from the facticity of his human existence with its pulls and temptations, traditionally Jesus is considered to be sinless, and there is no rupture between Jesus' will and that of the Father's, even if Jesus' human nature struggles in His obedience.[177] Mark's sensitivity to the humanity of Christ sits perfectly well alongside John's version of Jesus' prayer for Himself, which emphasises the glory of the Logos.[178]

An appeal to the Jesus-Spirit relationship hardly provides a panacea to the issues underlying the *generating question* of this thesis. In fact, although the Spirit is integral to Jesus' birth, ministry, death and resurrection, little illumination is given to the relation of the Spirit with Jesus' subjectivity or questions of freedom and identity. As I have argued

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[175] I am thinking of Brian Gaybba as a possible advocate of such a position. He writes: "While it is true that their common divinity is an unbreakable link between the Father and the Son, it is not their common divinity that unites them *as persons*. It is the Spirit of their love that does that. Their common divinity is, if you like, a merely 'physical' unity. True unity between persons only exists where there is love." B. Gaybba, *The Spirit of Love. Theology of the Spirit* (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1987), p.149.

[176] Thomas G. Weinandy, *The Father's Spirit of Sonship. Reconceiving the Trinity*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), pp.117. It should be noted that Weinandy adopts, in some respects, an Augustinian position as regards the relationship of Jesus and the Spirit. ibid., pp.66-77.

[177] Take, for example, Jesus' prayer to the Father at Gethsemane, Mark 14:36.

[178] John 17:1-5.

elsewhere,[179] the fruits of a trinitarian analogy are at most structural and of a general nature. This is important, nonetheless, in offering guidelines to theological exposition in other *loci* of theology.

In the role of offering general guidelines, a trinitarian analogy can provide a *prima facie*, although insufficient, case for holding that the *generating question* of this thesis may receive a constructive outcome. As we have seen, John's Gospel clearly suggests such an analogy, although being indistinct about the way the analogy is to be exactly understood. The Christian tradition explicated the relationship of the Father, Son and Spirit as that of three Divine *hypostaseis* who co-inhere one another (*perichoresis*) in communion (*koinonia*) in a way that respects the distinct personal particularity of each other, neither in a relation of absorption, nor subordination. Applying this analogically, if God acts in a way consistent with His being, then He will act towards His creatures in such a way that preserves and indeed, enhances the distinct personal particularity of each human creature, rather than frustrates it.[180] This constitutes a *prima facie* reason for supposing that human freedom and identity are respected in God's action. We should recall the negative analogies of this strategy, namely, that God is three *hypostaseis*, yet one being, whose being we can never fully grasp, whereas we are many individual beings.

Augustine famously associated the Trinity with the dialectics of love, and Richard of St. Victor, Bonaventura, Aquinas and modern theologians, including Bernard Lonergan, have subsequently developed this approach in different ways. This tradition is worth considering for two reasons: first, it may help us to clarify a little the intra-trinitarian role of the Spirit; and secondly, the dynamics of love have clear associations with the

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[179] Fermer, p.184ff.

[180] Karl Barth suggests that a christological analogy can argue along similar lines, drawing on the significance of the ascended humanity of Christ. Gunton explicates the point: "[T]here must be in God, despite the apparent absurdity of the claim, a *kind* of spatiality understood on the basis of his becoming spatial in Christ, but apophatically: 'God possesses space, His own space, and.... just because of this spatiality, he is able to be triune' (*CD*, II/1, p.468f.).... There is a distance within the inner-trinitarian relations, a kind of living space in which God is freely himself." C.E. Gunton, "The triune God and the freedom of the creature," in *Karl Barth: Centenary Essays*. ed. by S.W. Sykes (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p.48. One infers that spatiality in the human context creates the necessary boundaries to distinguish particular entities that possess freedom and personal identity. The ascended Christ introduces "spatiality" into the being of God, and re-enforces a metaphorical understanding of "spatiality" in the Trinity, whereby "space" is given to the distinctness and particularity of the Divine *hypostaseis*. Gunton seems to be using the concept of spatiality more clearly in a metaphorical way later, when he writes: "the triune God...because he has space to live in himself, can therefore give to his creatures space to live in." ibid, p.58.

Personalist model that shall be examined in Chapters 3 and 4.[181] In Chapter VIII of *De Trinitate* Augustine offers interpersonal love as an analogy of the Trinity.[182] He distinguishes a triadic structure to love, which may work at an interpersonal level, but also in self-love (*amor sui*): *amans* (the lover), *quod amatur* (the beloved), and *amor* (love itself). This is not just an analogy for Augustine. If God is Love, our love flows from the fount of God's being and is enabled by it. Loving has a circular movement, for in loving our neighbour two things occur: we love from God's love, and we love loving, and hence, we love God. Love has an orientation to the transcendent; it moves from and to God.[183] He later goes on to appropriate *amor* to the Spirit; the Spirit is the bond of love between the Father and the Son.[184] Augustine has been criticised for de-personalising the Spirit by making this identification, undermining the *hypostatic* distinctness of the Spirit.[185]

Nevertheless, one may maintain the specific *hypostatic* uniqueness of the Spirit, while contending that the function of the Spirit is indeed as Augustine saw it, a unitive and mediatorial role within the Trinity. As J.V. Taylor argues the Spirit is the "go-between God," mediating the Father's love for the Son and returning the Son's love to the Father, not as Love as a relation but as *hypostasis*. Further, this intra-trinitarian role is mirrored in the function of the Spirit in the economy of salvation. As Dumitru Stanislav has argued:

> The Holy Spirit is what unites the Father and the Son, not as essence, but precisely as Person, leaving Father and Son at the same time as free persons. Hence the Spirit is also the one who unites men among themselves, but as a Person himself he leaves other persons free.[186]

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[181] For example, Ewert Cousins writes: "Richard's [of St. Victor] concern for interpersonal relations and his exploration of human love as self-transcendence link him with twentieth-century personalism... Richard's method shares a common point of departure with contemporary theological humanism and theological anthropology.... It is by being immersed in human experience that Richard is able to reach the point where the human interpenetrates the divine, where anthropology becomes theology." E. Cousins, "A Theology of Interpersonal Relations," *Thought*, Vol. XLV (1970), pp.56-7.

[182] "[T]hou dost see the Trinity if thou sees love." Richard of St. Victor, *De Trinitate*, VIII, 8, no.12.

[183] "Therefore we love God and our neighbour from one and the same love; but we love God for the sake of God, and ourselves and our neighbours for the sake of God." ibid..

[184] *De Trin.*, IX, 12, no.17; VII, 10, no.14.

[185] "By attributing to the Spirit the kind of love that he does, Augustine thus attracts attention away from the economy of salvation in two major ways: he minimizes the part played in the development of the doctrine of the Trinity by the incarnation – for an incarnational conception of love is scarcely to be found – and he obscures the specific hypostatic uniqueness of the Holy Spirit. Because, we might also say, he has an inadequate conception of love as love for the other as other, he is unable to conceive true otherness in the Trinity, another feature which can be seen to be a function of too strong an emphasis on the unity of God." Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian*, p.51.

[186] D. Staniloae, *Theology of the Church*, trans. Robert Barringer (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980), p.67.

Here we have a conception of the Spirit as mediating personal particularity and distinctness, in the exchange of love and communication, without either subsuming or confounding.[187] An analogy here with the Spirit-human relation would suggest, that if the Spirit acted in a way concordant with the Spirit's function *ad intra*, then we should expect the Spirit to act in a way which respects and enhances human particularity and freedom.

Richard of St. Victor developed Augustine's analysis of the dynamics of love further in a Trinitarian context. His theological method accepts the priority of faith, but seeks for its interaction with experience and reason.[188] Richard extends the personal and self-transcending nature of ecstatic love, which Augustine begins to draw out in his account of love of one's neighbour. The central bi-polar structure of the mutual love of the *amans* (the lover) and the *quod amatur* (the beloved) remains the same, but Richard explicates the third feature of love in a different way. If love as self-transcending charity is not to turn in on itself in a selfish insularity, love of a third is required.[189] The insularity may be considered to be a love that loves the other because of the other's love for one; it becomes a form of self-love, a love that is a mirroring or correspondence.[190] A third movement of

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[187] C.E. Gunton also pursues this line, although to a different outcome which may be questioned. He writes: "The Holy Spirit is then indeed the dynamic of the divine love, but one that seeks to involve the other in the movement of giving and receiving that is the Trinity: that is, *to perfect the love of Father and Son by moving it beyond itself.* Corresponding to the eschatological movement of the Spirit *ad extra* there is within the divine eternity one who perfects the love of God as love in community. To be God is to be intrinsically related to the other in communion, and the Spirit is the one who enables this communion to be." "The Holy Spirit," p.127. My concerns relating to this position are twofold. First, I am not comfortable with the language of "otherness" in God. The concept, at least in its use in Continental Philosophy, indicates that which comes from beyond one's consciousness, in the words of Emmanuel Levinas, "beyond being." This sense of radical alterity is simply inappropriate for the Divine *hypostaseis*, who all share the one *ousia*. Secondly, it seems to me that if one holds, as Gunton does, that God's love is only "perfected" outside of itself, despite his denials, one is in danger of making creation necessary. Gunton maintains that one can say both that God's love is "self-sufficient" and that it is perfected in an "outward-going" movement without explanation of the apparent contradiction.

[188] E. Cousins comments on Richard's method: "In the epistemology of illumination, man is seen as the image of God, with the divine light shining in his soul as a mirror. The divine light brings man in contact with eternal and necessary truth. .... As the image of God, man is turned toward and reflects God, his Exemplar." Cousins, p.64.

[189] "[N]o one is properly said to have charity on the basis of his own private love of himself. And so it is necessary for love to be directed toward another for it to be charity." *De Trin.*, III.ch.2.

[190] It is of interest to note given the part that his work will play in Chapter 4, that Emmanuel Levinas also employs a concept of "the Third" in his writings, which is not as far as I am aware derived from Richard of St. Victor, but has more to do with etymology. Levinas invents a term, "*illeity*," which is derived from the third person form, "*il/ille*." *Illeity* refers to our encounter with God, whom we may not address as "toi" nor "vous," which imply too much familiarity. *Illeity* here safeguards the alterity of God. Yet, *illeity* also refers to the "the third party"(*le tiers*), in a sense much closer to Richard of St. Victor, as that which prevents the encounter of the Self and the Other from becoming introverted. There are others with whom the Other I encounter is already in relationship and whom disabuse me of the illusion that the Other is just there for me. Levinas talks of "the third party" as the one whom the Other "already serves" prior to his encounter with me.

love is required: the mutual love of the two is bound together in such a way that a "shared love" is possible which goes out to the third (*condilectus*, the mutually beloved of the Father and Son):

> Shared love is properly said to exist when a third person is loved by two persons harmoniously and in community, and the affection of the two persons is fused into one affection by the flame of love for the third.[191]

Shared love is not a disguised form of self-love (*amor privatus*);[192] rather a mutual loving is a love of the love that is in the beloved and the lover (as in Augustine's account of love of one's neighbour). For Richard this love of loving brings about the shared love, which overflows to the third (*caritas consummata*), and one might add, the return of that love by the Spirit to complete the circle (*perichoresis*).

This analysis of the dynamics of love need to be distilled from Richard's more ambitious claim, namely, that the triadic structure of love provides "necessary reasons" for the doctrine of the Trinity,[193] and whether the sequential view of the development of love can provide an adequate account of the origin and procession of the Divine *hypostaseis*.[194] Neither is there really any "necessary reason" in Richard's account of why self-transcending charity should halt with love for the third. One can only say that there is no necessity in God's love expressing itself in creation, because His very being is a triune love, a relational and personal communion of the Divine *hypostaseis* in perfect love.[195]

E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*. trans. A. Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), p. 213. "The third party" represents the community of others or society, who refuse to fall into a species or class. It also enables the Self to think in terms of social justice. These two points are connected by Levinas' contention that God is the ultimate condition of the Self's encounter with the Other: "...the response to an Enigma or morality, is an intrigue with three personges: the I approaches the Infinite by going generously toward the You, who is still my contemporary, but, in the trace of Illeity, presents himself [the You] out of a depth of the past, faces and approaches me." E. Levinas, "Enigma and Philosophy, " in *Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*. ed. A. Peperzak, R. Bernasconi & S. Critchley, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 176.

[191] *De Trin.*, III, ch. 19.

[192] "The supreme level of goodness seems to exist there, when supreme love is given and nothing is obtained in return for the fullness of its own happiness." ibid., III, ch.18.

[193] For Aquinas the psychological analogy of the production of the word in the mind and the consequent love as an act of will are for Aquinas not proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity, as one cannot prove the mysteries of faith, *ad demonstrationem fidei* but only act as *ad manifestationem fidei*. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.32, a.1, ad 2.

[194] William J. Hill, Op., *The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation* (Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1982), pp. 230-1.

[195] Having said this, God's overflowing love in creation is characteristic of His being. Christoph Schwöbel distinguishes between God's *primordial* self-sufficiency in His triune love and His *consequent* "need," I prefer the term "wish or intention," for the response of creation in love. C. Schwöbel, "God is Love. The Model of Love and the Trinity," *NZSTRP*, Vol.40, no.3 (1998), pp.307-328.

One also needs to be aware of the dangers of anthropomorphism and tri-theism. Nonetheless, if Augustine's claim is correct that there is a triadic structure to self-love (*amor sui*), and we can maintain an analogical distance between the Divine *hypostaseis* and human persons, then we may conclude that the character of intra-trinitarian love is an overflowing, movement of love between the distinct *hypostaseis*. The individual Divine *hypostaseis* when they love one another always love with a love which love's beyond a mere duality. Hence, the Father's love for the Son is also at the same time a love reaching beyond the Son to the Spirit. This not only re-enforces the conclusion that the Spirit has an intra-trinitarian unitive and mediatorial role between the Father and the Son and ultimately in relation to creation, but it also shows that the doctrine of the Trinity has a "*constitutive function*,"[196] even if only at a general level, in helping to construct any Personalist model we may wish to employ in our argument. The ecstatic nature of trinitarian love also points to the necessity of the Christian community as the context of love of God.

In sum, a trinitarian analogy, in and of itself, does not constitute a *sufficient* response to the *generating question*, but offers us only guidelines and a framework to aid our enquiry. It is insufficient because the doctrine of the Trinity, in the final analysis, is a doctrine about the nature of God and not about the relation of the Spirit to the human in the application of redemption. Claims concerning Christian *metamorphosis* are part of Christian revelation and are open to further exploration and explication. At best this application of a trinitarianananalogy provides us with a prolegomena to the search for a response to the *generating question*, it does not provide us with the sole or even central methodological tool to obtain such a response. Now, we must move from prolegomena to the attempt at explication.

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[196] ibid., p. 328.

CHAPTER 2

THE DIVINE FIAT VIEW OF THE SPIRIT-HUMAN RELATION.

Chapter 1 provided an initial, although not sufficient,[197] reason for thinking that God does grant His creatures relative autonomy, namely, the fact that particularity and distinctness is to be found within the being of God Himself, the triune communion of the three *hypostaseis*. It was reasoned that if God acts towards His creatures in a way which is consonant with His own being, then God will act in a fashion which seeks to safeguard human particularity and distinctness, to the end of personal union in relationship. This provides us with an *prima facie* case, from the doctrine of God, for supposing that the *generating question* of this thesis may admit a constructive outcome.

In this Chapter the contention of the thesis that the *generating question* has been neglected in much theological literature will be examined in relation to two modern accounts drawn from very different theological traditions: David Brown undertaking "philosophical theology" from the Anglo-Catholic tradition, and Karl Barth, from a Reformed position. The Chapter will stake out the type of theological position, the "Divine Fiat view," to which the thesis wishes to offer an alternative, by proposing a Personalist model. The criteria of human freedom and personal identity arrived at in Chapter 1 will be applied to argue that the two accounts considered provide a less than satisfactory resolution of the *generating question*. Both result in variants of a "Divine Fiat" view. Brown's position it shall be argued involves the displacement of the human subject by the Spirit, whereas Barth offers a christological determinism, which lacks pneumatological specificity.

The term "Divine Fiat" I derive from the work of John Oman's, *Grace and Personality*, which he specifically uses to refer to Divine grace conceived as an irresistible power of an omnipotence, directed by omniscience, which overrides the human spirit:[198]

> [A] direct force controlling persons as things is no personal relation between God and man; and the religion which rests on it does nothing to maintain the supreme interest of religion, which is the worth of persons over things, of moral values over material forces. God might so act upon

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[197] It is insufficient because the doctrine of the Trinity is a doctrine about the nature of God and not about the relation of the Spirit to the human in the application of redemption. Thus, it may only guide the construction of theology in other *loci*, not determine them.

[198] Oman, pp. 39, 42.

> men and still be a person, but there would be nothing personal in His acting.[199]

The Divine Fiat view, in this thesis, maintains that the Spirit "takes over" or displaces the human subject, at least temporarily. The *metamorphosis* of the human by the Spirit is brought about in a *causal*, rather than a personal manner. The substance of this distinction will be further explicated when a Personalist Model is explicated in Chapter 3. For our purposes here all that needs to be said is that a personal relationship is by nature dialogical, requiring response and interaction of both parties at a level of psychological complexity. The way of persons is that of persuasion and personal presence. On the other hand, as Marcel Sarot writes: "If something or someone is causally influenced, it does not have the choice to react or not. It just has to do what the causal influence makes it do."[200] The "Divine Fiat" view is the position that this thesis most directly reacts against, and it will be argued that it is opposed to the model of explanation which I consider best accounts for the Spirit-human relation, namely, a Personalist model to which we shall turn in Chapter 3.

I.) David Brown on the Spirit as "God pressing to become subject".[201]

The problem which Brown attempts to address in his Chapter on the Spirit in his monograph, *The Divine Trinity*, is not the same as the *generating question* of my thesis. His argument seeks to establish the divinity and, more significantly in the light of early church history, the *personhood* of the Spirit. His argument is, in large part, a historical one, involving analysis of the New Testament data. His additional, more philosophical arguments, are based on the experience to be found in the New Testament, from the testimony of Christian mystics and from non-Christian religious sources. The bulk of his historical argument is, therefore, not to be contested but may be considered a necessary precursor to the question posed by this thesis. Rather, our attention will focus on a particular philosophical argument that Brown mounts as an attempt to explain the Spirit's 'indwelling' of the believer. Although, this is a philosophical development, Brown claims the argument is "already implicitly in the New Testament,"[202] which is rather odd given its

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[199] ibid., p.26.
[200] M. Sarot, *God, Passibility and Corporeality* (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1992), p.28.
[201] The reason I give for selecting David Brown's account for analysis is that his position has provoked the primary author whose work on the Spirit was most influential to me in the inception of this thesis, namely, William Alston (see Chapter 4).
[202] D. Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, p.203.

distinctly Cartesian turn, and he seems especially influenced, in this view, by his reading of the Pentecost narrative in Luke-Acts.

Brown's argument has four parts.

Part 1) He establishes a "parallel" between the indwelling of the Spirit and "the presence of other spiritual beings."[203] The question is then posed as to whether the structure of the experience of the indwelling of the Spirit is more like, (a.) being assailed by demons, or (b.) demon possession. Brown plumps for the latter:

> The difference surely amounts to this: the former still feels that his person is intact but that it is clearly under attack from without, whereas the latter sees himself as no longer in full control of personhood. ....clearly indwelling is comparable to possession in this respect at least, namely that, as we have seen especially with regard to the definitive experiences, the only possible subject is not the human individual but the indwelling divine power, the Holy Spirit; for in calling the experience impersonal the individual in acknowledging that he sees himself as no more than a vehicle or a channel for the Spirit's power in action.[204]

Part 2) Indwelling conceived of in this way trumps any *prima facie* concerns that the indwelling of the Spirit involves a localising of the God in space and time:

> Thus the point of the terminology of indwelling is neither to localise the divine presence nor merely to indicate divine activity *per se*, but rather to describe a special form of divine activity, in which God is seen as the true subject of the individual's actions.[205]

Part 3.) It follows from the comparison with demon possession that, once the Spirit becomes subject, one is unaware of His presence.

Part 4.) Whereas in the case of demon possession there is a fraught transition from the state of experiencing the demon as an object (i.e. the struggle of being assailed by a demon), to the demon becoming the subject, "in the case of the Spirit...he at least is wanting to be the subject of good actions but does not wish to become the subject through overriding the individual's free will."[206]

Brown draws the conclusion:

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[203] ibid., p.200.
[204] ibid., p.201.
[205] ibid., p.201.
[206] ibid., p.201.

> Now, if this is what is happening, the appropriate description for indwelling becomes something like the following: *God as or pressing to become subject* (*though a pressing that is without compulsion*).[207]

Is Brown's account of the Spirit's indwelling compatible with the conceptions of freedom and personal identity presented in Chapter 1? One might consider that Brown's account ensures the integrity of human freedom and personal identity by his employment of the saving clause, "*though a pressing that is without compulsion.*" However, this is neither explained, and on inspection, appears to be of little relevance. First, Brown does not show how the Spirit, unlike demons, relates to the human in a personal manner, to the point where a Divine "take-over" is acceptable to the human subject. Secondly, suppose, for the sake of argument, one adopts a Searlean position in the philosophy of mind, viz. mind-brain identity. If I freely agree to having my brain removed from my body, and liquidated, and then another brain transplanted in its place, I will have made a free choice, but I will no longer be said to be free, for I simply will not be in a position to exercise my will through my body any longer! Drawing upon one of the criteria of freedom outlined in Chapter 1, if the Spirit is subject, then, my volitions are not engendered by an *intrinsic principle*, viz. the interaction of my intellect and will, but by an *extrinsic principle.*

Now, I do not quite know what Brown thinks happens to the human subject when the Spirit becomes subject. However, if the Spirit *is* subject, both my freedom and personal identity seem to be irrelevant. It is no longer "I" who is doing the experiencing. The comparison with demon possession does not really placate one's worries at this point: I am possessed by the Spirit, in Brown's words "taken over". During the possession the human subject is not aware of the Spirit's activity. This suggests further that the human subject's freedom and identity is being compromised. Brown quotes some of Andrew Louth's exegesis of Plotinus to support his case. We are not commonly aware of good health, or of the act of reading when we are involved in the subject matter of activity. Yet, such circumstances in our lives seem to have a completely different status to possession by

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[207] ibid.. The place of this thesis in Brown's overall argument for the distinct personhood of the Spirit is as follows: since the Spirit aims to be permanently functioning as subject of the human being's experience, thoughts and actions, we can hardly suppose that He is the same person as either the Father or the Son, whom we experience *as other persons*, "over and against ourselves", as the *objects* of experience. However, my concerns do not relate to the success of Brown's overall argument for the distinct personhood of the Spirit, which is assumed. For a critical examination of Brown's main argument in his Chapter, see William Alston, "The Holy Spirit and the Trinity", in *Philosophy and theological discourse*, ed.by S.T. Davies (New York:St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp.102-123.

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Now, I do not quite know what Brown thinks happens to the human subject when the Spirit becomes subject. However, if the Spirit *is* subject, both my freedom and personal identity seem to be irrelevant. It is no longer "I" who is doing the experiencing. The comparison with demon possession does not really placate one's worries at this point: I am possessed by the Spirit, in Brown's words "taken over". During the possession the human subject is not aware of the Spirit's activity. This suggests further that the human subject's freedom and identity is being compromised. Brown quotes some of Andrew Louth's exegesis of Plotinus to support his case. We are not commonly aware of good health, or of the act of reading when we are involved in the subject matter of activity. Yet, such circumstances in our lives seem to have a completely different status to possession by

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[207] ibid.. The place of this thesis in Brown's overall argument for the distinct personhood of the Spirit is as follows: since the Spirit aims to be permanently functioning as subject of the human being's experience, thoughts and actions, we can hardly suppose that He is the same person as either the Father or the Son, whom we experience *as other persons*, "over and against ourselves", as the *objects* of experience. However, my concerns do not relate to the success of Brown's overall argument for the distinct personhood of the Spirit, which is assumed. For a critical examination of Brown's main argument in his Chapter, see William Alston, "The Holy Spirit and the Trinity", in *Philosophy and theological discourse*, ed.by S.T. Davies (New York:St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp.102-123.

another subject of agency. I may not be self-conscious of reading when I am engrossed in my novel, but it is certainly me as subject who is having the experience of reading. One need not have something in the forefront of one's consciousness to be the subject of the experience, one may, to use M. Polanyi's concept, be 'tacitly' aware of the experience.[208]

It is conceivable that the Holy Spirit's "becoming subject" could be merely episodic. Such episodes of being "filled" with the Spirit could be sanctioned prior to the filling, depending on the circumstances, and would be compatible with human freedom and personal identity precisely because of their episodic nature. They do not deprive the human subject of agency for long enough to threaten his/her personal identity, and do not instigate radical qualitative change of identity. The experiences may be considered to be analogous to sleep. Human beings do not choose, as such, to sleep, and during the period of sleep cannot tell a consistent story about their subjectivity. Sleep involves a loss of consciousness, yet does not entail a loss of personal identity or a fragmentation of the person. Another example would be the case of a medical operation. The doctor gives me general anaesthetic with my consent, and I trust the doctor in the period of its efficacy. Yet, both these analogies do not quite fit our case as they are instances of our subjectivity being temporarily suspended, rather than "taken over." Moreover, Brown is purporting to give a description of the indwelling of the Spirit, but indwelling is precisely not episodic, but continuous, the gift of the Risen Lord.[209]

Brown's claim that such a thesis has a proto-structure in Scripture is not followed through. It is noticeable that when Brown presents his explication of indwelling, he does not refer back to his discussion of Scripture, but in fact, only quotes Plotinus and the mystics directly to support his case. William Alston points out in relation to the Biblical support for the "*pressing to become subject*" thesis, that:

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[208] Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958); *The Tacit Dimension* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966).

[209] See John 14.16 "he may abide with you for ever." An interesting comparison here is with Paul's conception of the Spirit's role in prayer (Rom. 8.26-7). The Spirit "intercedes for us". But this, in the context of verses 18-27, seems to be a point primarily about God's triumph taking place, notwithstanding our weakness and the sufferings of the world, "but also *in the midst of* and *because of* our weakness and suffering". Moreover, intercession is very different from 'take-over'. Compare to the "overshadowing" of Mary in Luke 1.35. Again, this is a different concept from "take-over". Mary has been informed and accepted the Divine intervention, and it does not constitute a complete "take-over" or subjugation.

> ...it is by no means clear from the allusions to such matters in the New Testament, including the account of Pentecost in Acts 2, that this is what the participants *thought* was happening, much less that they took themselves to be experientially aware of such a situation. Nor can I see that Paul's many references to the Holy Spirit as 'bearing witness', 'interceding', 'teaching', 'giving life'.... are in terms of the Spirit's taking over the normal subjective functions of the human person.[210]

Such activity implies the interaction of two subjects, not one person "*pressing to become subject always*". By describing the Spirit's role as "subject" of sanctified human action, Brown undercuts the very New Testament language that he was drawing on to make his case for the distinct personhood of the Spirit. As for the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, the disciples' subjectivities would only have been 'taken-over' had they become mere automata of the Spirit. Yet the text describes the Spirit as 'enabling' them (v.4), not as overpowering them.

It is often forgotten that the bulk of the Pentecost event in *Acts* is taken up by Peter's address to the crowd.[211] It is only after Peter's address to the assembled gathering that large numbers of people are converted - surely the main fruit of the outpouring of the Spirit. Peter's address most definitely involves his subjectivity, which can hardly have been bypassed or 'taken-over', yet no doubt was enabled and empowered by the Spirit. The key word in the text is "filled", as Howard Marshall notes.[212] The event of "filling" is not identical with "take-over" or displacement, which is why the German poet Erich Fried can use it as a metaphor for intimate personal relationships in his poem "Breathing Space". The Pauline corpus testifies to the *enabling* function of the Spirit which "*assists* the human subject to do and be the things in question"[213] rather than displaces it. If one takes Scripture as a whole, as a symphony so to speak, then Pentecost is the counter-point to the story of Babel,[214] which is an event which fragments personal communion. The Pentecost narrative in *Acts*, on the other hand, is an event which brings about personal communion,

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[210] Alston, "The Holy Spirit and the Trinity", p.117. Alston cites Romans, 8.9-11 and Romans 8:15-16 as evidence of his claim here. He goes on to argue that in the Pauline passages where a "take-over" reading seems more explicit, the Holy Spirit is not mentioned (Phil. 2.13; Gal. 2.20: "my point is that such a 'not I but God is doing it' is not typical of Pauline pronouncements on the work of God as indwelling." ibid., pp.118. One would also want to supplement Alston's point here with testimony from John's Gospel, where the Spirit is said to "teach", "bear witness", "speak" (16.4-15).

[211] Acts 2.14-36.

[212] I. Howard Marshall, "The Significance of Pentecost," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol.30 (1977), p.369.

[213] Alston, "The Holy Spirit and the Trinity", p.118.

[214] Genesis 11.

as shown by the Spirit's gift of communication across linguistic barriers, and the possibility of universal mission, which augurs the re-uniting of human kind with the personal God, revealed in the person of Jesus Christ.

I.01) An Argument From Mystical Experience.

To fully allow Brown to explain what happens to the human subject when the Spirit "presses to become subject", we must consider his second argument, from mystical experience. It rests on a distinction which has already come into play in the differentiation between subject and object, and is here rendered as "a distinction between immanent and transcendent, aspects of deity, between what in Christian terminology may appropriately be called Spirit and Father."[215] From the mystic Jan van Ruysbroeck Brown draws the following conclusion, which he subsequently argues is supported by his very brief tour through other assorted mystics and alternative religious traditions:

> [T]here is such identification with the indwelling of the Spirit that he can speak of himself as God, while through such identification there comes a union of intimacy with the Father, being 'God with God' so that here some sort of separate identity is still being maintained.[216]

This does provide some clarification of what Brown *intends* by his thesis that the Spirit is always "pressing to become subject." He wishes to draw on the support of the autotheistic sayings of the mystics ("to be God with God"). Unlike the case of the brain transplant given above, the indigenous human subject is not annihilated, Brown wishes to maintain, although the human subject is called "God", which does present some questions concerning continuing human personal identity. There is identification, but not in principle substitution or absorption. The identification is couched in the language of interpersonal human relations, "Spiritual Marriage". Brown continues:

> If this is so and this is the correct account of the experience, then what we seem to have is a record of a human individual himself experiencing a distinction within the Godhead, with the Spirit so catching him up into his own life as to make him part of his own experience within the Godhead in relation to the Father.[217]

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[215] Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, p.207. This description seems a rather unfortunate parcelling out of the functions of the trinitarian *hypostaseis*. The Spirit's action is immanent in the indwelling of the Christian believer, but it is an immanence which maintains transcendence, not least because it is an immanence which mediates the presence of the Father.

[216] ibid., p.209.

[217] ibid..

Being "caught up" in the Spirit's own life hardly amounts to the Spirit becoming the subject of my experiences and action. One cannot be 'intimate,' or have a 'separate identity,' or "participate in his [Spirit's] relation to the Father," if it is the Spirit who is subject.

What the human seems to 'experience' on Brown's model of mystical experience is not its own relation to God, but the Spirit's relation to the Father. In fact, Brown wishes to argue that mystical experiences reveal a simultaneous dialectic of identity and intimacy: "there is such identification with the indwelling of the Spirit that he can speak of himself as God, while through such identification there comes what is rather a union of intimacy with the Father, being 'God with God' so that here some sort of separate identity is still being maintained."[218] Brown interprets such a dialectic as a reason for saying that the *two* experiences of identification and intimacy, have *different* objects of reference: the former relating to the Spirit's "take-over", and the latter (intimacy) "an experience of the identifying agent [I take this to refer to the Spirit?] relating one to some third thing[Father]."[219]

However, this explanation does not placate fears as to the place of the human being in this dialectic. In the first stage, the *Spirit becomes subject* of the human, conceived on the model of take-over. As we have seen this seems to be contrary to human freedom and personal identity. Secondly, there is the experience of the distinction *within* the Godhead. This could only be so if it was an experience of the Spirit relating to the Father, but given the Spirit has *become subject*, how may a "*human individual* himself" experience such a distinction? Surely it would then be the experience of the Spirit, which is an experience of God, experiencing Himself and not the human individual as the subject of the experience. Brown's position leads to confusion and blurring of the human and Divine identity.

It will be the argument of this thesis that a "Personalist model" could remedy the problems which Brown faces. Moreover, although some mystics such as Ruysbroec and Eckhart may appear to lend support, with their tendency to conceive of the human spirit as subsumed in some way into the Divine, it is far from clear that the "mystical tradition" would

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[218] ibid..
[219] ibid., p.211.

universally support Brown's thesis. For example, those mystics who fall under the category of "Bridal mysticism,"[220] explicate the *unio mystica* in personal terms, derived from an analogy between the relationship of God and man, and the Bridegroom and his bride, as in the Song of Solomon. Grace Jantzen answers the charge of monism often levelled customarily against the mystics, viz. that mysticism requires a unity of substance or essence between God and the soul, in which the distinction between subject and object is annulled. This is a misinterpretation based on a lack of sensitivity to textual context, and the way that some mystics use language. She argues that in Bernard of Clairvaux, for instance, the "merging of God and the soul is a union of charity and will, not a merging of substance."[221] The distinction between the Creator and creature in these mystics is not drawn on the basis of the metaphysics of substance, but on the created autonomy of will.

> It is no accident that Bernard, in company with many others in the Christian mystical tradition, uses erotic imagery to depict mystical union: the merging of wills and affections in loving sexual encounter is enhanced, not undermined, by the strength of personhood of each participant, and each bring their full selves to the partnership and are cherished in it. .... In a healthy relationship, there is not obliteration of distinction, or a merging of subject and object, but a glad nurturing of the selfhood of each. If this is the model of mystical union, it can hardly be called monistic.[222]

This useful correction to the reading of some of the language of the mystics gain points to the problem of Brown's emphasis on the concept of the *subject* as the basis for Divine/human indwelling. For that implies substantial union, rather than the union of wills. Despite being a friend of the mystics, Brown appears to have interpreted them along

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[220] Frans Maas, "A Personal or Impersonal God - An Old Problem of Western Mysticism?" in *A Personal God?* eds. by Edward Schillebeeckx and Bas van Iersel (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977), pp.94-104.

[221] G. Jantzen, "'Where Two are to Become One': Mysticism and Monism," in *Philosophy in Christianity*, ed. by Godfrey Vesey (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p. 157. She says of John of the Cross' metaphors of the log and the flame, and the light shining on the pure crystal: "John is speaking, not of diminishment of human freedom, but of its fullness, indeed of such total liberation that the quality of action can be compared to nothing less than the freedom of God." ibid., p.159.

[222] ibid., p.158. This conclusion is also reached by J. A. Wiseman, O.S.B.: "From all that was written about the linguistic similarity between the autotheistic language of Ruusbroec and the language of human lovers who claim to "be" the one whom they love, it seems reasonable to accept as a working hypothesis the conclusion that the mystics' autotheistic claims can often be best explained as their attempts to put into words the intense experience of loving union with God which they have undergone, since, as psychiatrists like Freud and Gaylin have indicated, a sense of fusion or 'merging of the self with another person or ideal, creating a fused identity,' tends to be an integral aspect of all love on the part of a human being." James A. Wiseman, O.S.B, "'To be God with God': the Autotheistic Sayings of the Mystics", *Theological Studies*, Vol.51 (1990), pp.246-7. Willard Gaylin in *Rediscovering Love* writes that among the capacities he has found essential in human love is a "capacity for fusion", that is "the merging of the self with another person or ideal, creating a fused identity." Quoted in Wiseman, p.242.

lines which would substantiate rather than avert the charge of monism, and hence fuel common criticisms of them.

In summation of this section, Brown's description of the Spirit as "*pressing to become subject*" founders on the rocks of a misplaced representation of the Biblical witness and the undermining of the identity and freedom of the human agent. Even if one replaced the controlling concept in Brown's argument, the Spirit "*pressing to become subject*," with an alternative, for instance the Spirit as "*directing subject*," further explanation is still required as to how the Spirit *directs* in such a way as to respect human freedom and identity. Positively, one can concur with Alston that "it is greatly to Brown's credit"[223] to have brought into play the mysticism as an important source in this debate. It is in fact the mystical tradition which has developed to the greatest extent the "Personalist model", which shall be examined in the next Chapter. In his analysis Brown has touched upon a much larger issue, to which we must turn in later Chapters, namely the place of the Spirit within subject-object categories. Thus, Eric Schraeder argued that pneumatology is the ground of the non-objectivity of God, as Kilian McDonnell articulates it:

> The Holy Spirit cannot be objectified and viewed from a distance simply because, though distinct, the Spirit is not separable from the very processes by which an attempt is made to "define" Him. The Spirit can never become an object of theological reflection in the sense that the sacrament of baptism can, because the Spirit is the universal comprehensive horizon within which any and all theological reflection is possible.[224]

This is a version of the broader issue of the interplay between the transcendence and immanence of God, and does not rule out knowledge of the Spirit from His actions or operations towards us, what Moltmann calls "deductive knowing."[225]

II.) Karl Barth: Divine Determination And The Freedom Of The Creature.

Another theologian from a different theological tradition, presents us with an alternative theology of Revelation, but with results for human freedom and identity which may equally be categorised as leading to a "Divine Fiat" view. Karl Barth has been selected not only because he is one of the pre-eminent theologians of the twentieth century, but because

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[223] "The Holy Spirit and the Trinity," p.119.

[224] McDonnell, "A Trinitarian Theology", pp.216. "The Spirit known (object) is discovered by the Spirit knowing (subject)" ibid.. E. Schaeder's monograph referred to is: *Das Geistproblem der Theologie*. Jürgen Moltmann makes a similar point: "We can only talk *out* of the Spirit." Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p.157.

he, perhaps more than anyone in his theology, has stressed the radical discontinuity between God and humanity, between the old and the new. Colin Gunton provocatively writes of the question of the place of the freedom of the creature in Barth:

> Why are his [Barth's] words asserting the reality of freedom in the Spirit so widely disbelieved? Is it because they are empty rhetoric, and are overwhelmed by the logic of other things that he says? Or is it that the critics are simply operating with different preconceptions?[226]

These questions will be borne in mind as a critique of Barth's position is offered. It shall be argued that Gunton's two key questions can be answered in the affirmative. In addition, it will be maintained that Barth provides Brown's "Divine fiat" (or "take-over") conception of the Spirit's operation in the life of the believer with a theological undergirding, which is found to have weaknesses. Nonetheless, it shall be maintained that Barth's account raises some important theological issues which cannot be readily dismissed, but will be dealt with further in subsequent Chapters of this thesis.

II.0101) Exposition 1: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit and Subjective Revelation.

To understand Barth's view of Christian *metamorphosis*, one first has to have an insight into his basic theological epistemology. As is well known, Barth posits a radical discontinuity between humanity and God, upholding the absolute claims of the Divine subject in revelation, in reaction to the anthropocentric theology of the nineteenth century Liberal tradition.[227] There is no *analogia entis*, no "point of contact (*Anknuepfungspunkt*)" between God and humanity prior to the event of Revelation. The *analogia entis* of Aquinas is replaced by a revealed analogy, an *analogia fidei*, according to which faith is the result of God's Revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ, and the sending of the Spirit, to be the "teacher of the Word."[228] For the purposes of explication Barth distinguishes between, what he calls, "objective" and "subjective" revelation, which is clearly influenced

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[225] Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, p.285.

[226] "The triune God and the freedom of the creature", p.55. Gunton's own answer to these questions are both negative and affirmative: "... criticisms of Barth, though mistaken if they simply repeat Enlightened and Pelagian conceptions of human freedom, do have justification in a lack of attention paid by him to the distinctness of the triune persons and in particular to pneumatological dimensions of incarnation and salvation." ibid., p.64-5. These may be valid conclusions to draw from Barth's account and I am prepared to accept them. However, as shall be argued, Gunton's conclusion that Barth has established a "real" human freedom is mistaken and hence, there may be other grounds for wishing to alter Barth's account.

[227] Particular debating partners were Barth's erstwhile teachers and pupils of Albrecht Ritchl, Wilhelm Hermann, Adolf von Harnack and Martin Rade.

[228] K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I/2, ed. by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance, trans. by G.W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958), p.235.

by Calvin's distinction between 'internal' and 'external' revelation. Simply put "objective revelation" refers to the objective reality of the person and work of Jesus Christ as the Self-revelation of God. The recognition, acknowledgement and acceptance of 'objective revelation' by human beings, through the work of the Spirit, is what Barth categorises as "subjective revelation," and what concerns us. Calvin, too, taught that Scripture had to be "sealed by the internal testimony of the Spirit."

What is of particular interest here is Barth's treatment of human freedom in relation to 'subjective revelation'[229] and the 'outpouring of the Spirit,'[230] what has been called "God's giving by the Holy Spirit as well as man's receiving in the Holy Spirit."[231] In objective revelation God shows that He is free for humankind, and so, with Barth's usual intellectual symmetry, in subjective revelation humankind is made free for God through the agency of the Holy Spirit. We have no natural capacity to reach God in the bondage of sin, or what Barth calls the "sleep of death," so that, "To become free for God we must be convinced that we are not already free."[232] This is why for Barth to become a Christian does not involve a choice between alternatives:

> The whole idea of a possibility of faith confronted by that of unbelief, the whole conception of man as a Hercules at the crossroads able to choose between faith and sin, is pure illusion. Whatever may be the possibility of faith, this Hercules has always already chosen unbelief.[233]

In these circumstances Barth talks of the "necessity of faith,"[234] for it is precisely something which is not in our control.[235]

We can only have a true conception of freedom in relation to God. Elsewhere Barth calls the creation of faith a "counter-movement of a free human act," a "new freedom."[236] Faith

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[229] ibid., p.222ff.
[230] ibid., p.204f.
[231] Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Introduction to the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), p.28.
[232] Barth, I/2, p.258.
[233] ibid., IV/1, p.746.
[234] ibid., IV/1, p.746.
[235] It seems that for Barth this means a casting aside of our human intuitions concerning freedom: "For God to be revealed involves the dislodging of man from the estimation of his own freedom, and his enrichment with the freedom of the children of God." *Church Dogmatics* I/2, p.260.
[236] ibid., IV/1 pp. 745-6.

and the acknowledgement of revelation which it represents, is not a human capacity but a gift, a "miracle,"[237] and an act of God:

> In faith it is the right, the accepted, the acknowledged acknowledgement, not because man in himself has the power of, not because he has of himself succeeded in achieving this right acknowledgement, but because what he actually can and does compass is acknowledged by the acknowledged Word of God, not as self-determination, but as self-determination determined by the Word of God.[238]

There is still enough continuity of personal identity and integrity for Barth to talk of the Spirit's action being "achieved in our own experience and activity, in that act of self-determination which we call our human existence."[239] Certainly Barth is not advocating some divine-human mix, a change in the substance of which we are made: "This participation has nothing to do with a magical invasion of the interrelated totality of our psycho-physical human life by supernatural factors and forces."[240] Nonetheless, it is clearly God who is *active*, the "Master," giving Himself in His Son, who allows humankind to recognise His revelation, and through the Holy Spirit creates faith in His creatures, who assume a passive role. It is not simply a matter of God removing certain "internal constraints" to our freedom.[241] God does not remove sin and then allow His creature to choose whether to believe or not; such a possibility is an "illusion." As we have seen, even the very acknowledgement of revelation in faith is God's determination. Barth gives every impression that this is an intervention in the established structure of creation, a form of *hard* determinism:

> It does signify a limitation and interruption of our existence. Our existence is confronted by something outside and over against it, by which it is determined and indeed totally determined.[242]

In a further passage Barth compares God to temporal masters and authorities, which he claims allow us more independence than God does.[243] By implication Barth is claiming that as part of being "totally determined," God even controls our thoughts, and "determines" our noetic structure. There are no "neutral zones" in the event of subjective

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[237] ibid., I/1, p.275.
[238] ibid., I/1, p.263.
[239] ibid., I/2, p. 266.
[240] ibid..
[241] See Chapter 1, Sc. I.013) above.
[242] Barth, I/2, p.266.

revelation.[244] The way He chooses to express this is in the strong language of the master-slave relationship: "This relationship consists in the fact that he [the human person] is taken and bound and ruled."[245] It ought to be quite clear from this language, to answer one of Gunton's questions, why some critics are given to disbelieving the reality of freedom in the Spirit.

The general structure of Barth's account is one which is shared by many theologians. In the Anglican tradition, for example, Leonard Hodgson argues for the "mixed character" of God's gracious activity towards humankind. First, God acts at a "sub-personal" level which enables human creatures to evolve spiritually to the second stage, the state of full personal relations with the Divine "at the level of the conscious rational mind."[246] He writes, "We have seen that between God and His creatures there can be two kinds of relationship: onesidedly personal, as pictured in the analogy of the potter and the clay, and mutually personal."[247] This is in line with the traditional catholic (Augustinian) conception of the sequence of *operative* grace, followed by *cooperative grace.* A "greater good" style of argument is at work here. The Spirit's liberative action at a "subpersonal" level is justified, on this view, by the greater good of a personal Divine-human relationship that it brings. Little is then said about *how* such a position works in relation to the personal identity of the human creature.[248] One should also note the contrast between the nature of the end and means: one is personal, the other 'sub-personal'.

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[243] "Our thoughts at least - even only our subconscious thoughts- are always free in relation to it [the choice as to whether or not to recognise a worldly authority]. But the outpouring of the Holy Spirit means that man is placed under the Word, because it is God's Word." ibid., p.271.

[244] ibid., IV/2, p.503.

[245] ibid., I/2, p.273.

[246] Regarding his emphasis on "the conscious," Hodgson writes: "It has been my thesis throughout these lectures that the specifically biblical Christian revelation comes to us at the level of the conscious rational mind. God has been educating us in knowledge of Himself by doing things and inspiring men to grasp their significance. The minds of the men before whose eyes He does them are possessed by ingrained habits of thought which colour their vision. The work of the Holy Spirit in the minds of men is never ending so long as the newly-acquired truth is entangled with persisting error and is itself in need of clarification." Hodgson, p. 209.

[247] ibid., p.155.

[248] John Oman writing some years before Hodgson maintains that, "Experiences... are not personal merely because they happen to a person." Oman, p. 68. He argues that those who wish to conceive of Christian transformation entering "through some trap-door in the subconscious" undermine relative human moral independence: "If conversion means an awakening to our true relation both to God and man, and not merely

II.0102) Exposition 2: The Hour Glass. Barth's Two Stage Movement.

It was Hans Urs von Balthasar who used the model of an hour glass to describe the two stage movement in Barth's conception of the Divine-human relationship.[249] The idea is that the sand moves from the top, vertically downwards, signifying the sovereignty of Divine revelation and the Divine initiative. It flows through the constriction in the middle of the glass, which represents the paradigmatic significance of christology in revelation and for Christian anthropology. However, the second movement is the inversion of the glass, the flow from what was formerly on the "bottom," viz. the human domain. It represents the human response to God's Revelation, again only mediated through the christological constriction of the hour glass.[250] The image certainly signifies classical Christian thought. Problems arise in its outworking.

As we have seen, the only place in Barth's account of subjective revelation for voluntary action[251] is in the acknowledgement of that which has already been chosen and acknowledged for us, and hence to obediently follow in the path of the Divine action, in repetition.[252] Indeed, it is only in this act of *gratitude* and *acceptance* for what God has done for us in Christ and in the Spirit, that a human person moves from being the *object* of God's action to become a *subject* in her own right, and hence, for the *first time* responsible for her actions.[253]

Some commentators point out that Barth in *Church Dogmatics* IV/4, in line with the "hour glass" movement, softens his language concerning the Divine-human relationship, adopting the language of "partnership", and "active" human contribution. Barth gives us a strong defence of the importance of the creature having "a place of his own," to exercise

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some amendment of disposition, how can it be other than of conscious insight? Being a change of outlook...how can it be a sub-conscious change of nature?" ibid., p.74.

[249] H. Urs von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p.210.

[250] The image of the hour glass proposed by von Balthasar needs to be complemented by the *chiastic* structure of Barth's doctrine of reconciliation found in *Church Dogmatics Vol. IV/1-3*. There the two stage movement is conceived less in terms of temporal succession. The first action of the Divine self-humbling (*status exinanitionis*, IV/1 "The Lord as Servant") is mirrored by human nature's elevation to true humanity (*status exaltationis*, IV/2 "The Servant as Lord"). The two movements are integrated by the mediating action of Jesus Christ as both God and man (hypostatic union, IV/3 "Jesus Christ, the True Witness").

[251] For a definition see Chapter 1, section I.0I3).

[252] Barth, IV/1, p.748. Barth's reason for this is given: "For how can he destroy himself as the old man, posit himself as the new, and free himself for the true freedom in which he can believe." ibid..

[253] ibid., III/2, p.168.

real freedom and responsibility, "man is not ignored or passed over."[254] Admittedly, in Volume IV/4 Barth has moved from epistemology and the ontology of God, to the ethics of dogmatics, ecclesiology, and specifically the character and nature of faith. The theological opponent is no longer Liberal theology, but those who conceive of the church as performing divine-human works as vehicles and means of saving grace. His intent is to steer a course between, on the one side, "subjectivism from above" or "Christomonism," whereby Christ is the only true subject and humanity purely passive, and, on the other side, "subjectivism from below," whereby the human subject is active and the Divine subject a mere anthropocentric projection. He does so, though, by positing a radical distinction between the realm of the Divine subject and human subject, which is designed to protect the sovereignty of the Divine subject in salvation history. This dichotomy works itself out in his compartmentalising the Divine and human action in baptism: baptism by the Spirit is the work of the Divine subject; water baptism is the work of the human subject. This anti-sacramental position means that there can be no *mediation* of the Divine activity, only a repetition and correspondence to the christological paradigm. This position is not bought without a theological cost.[255]

II.0103) Exposition 3. *Analogia Relationis*: A Christocentric Anthropology.

An adequate account of how Barth deals with human freedom and "autonomy" cannot be given without turning to his christology and doctrine of election. God as sovereign, free subject elects humanity, in the person of the God-man, Jesus Christ, *antecedent* to and constitutive of any choice on the part of humanity. This Divine election establishes an *analogia relationis*, what J. Macken calls "a ladder of relationships" between God and man.[256] The relationships of the Trinity *ad intra*, are reflected in the relationship *ad extra* between God and the humanity of Jesus, the Incarnation as God's election of the "true man,"[257] in Jesus "God (*vere Deus*) is for man, and man (*vere homo*) is for God,"[258] the pivotal "mediator of the covenant."[259] Consequently, humanity is granted true autonomy through correlating with and corresponding to Jesus as "true man," in the outpouring of the

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[254] ibid., IV/4, pp. 22-23.

[255] Trutz Rentdorff argues that Barth's anti-sacramental position in IV/4 leads to the disintegration of the identity of the Church and the reduction of dogmatics to ethics. See J. Macken, *The Autonomy Theme in the Church Dogmatics*. Karl Barth and His Critics (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), pp.11-13, 125-33, 177-80.

[256] Macken, p.57.

[257] Barth IV/2, Sc.64.3.

[258] ibid., IV/2, p.582. Barth claims that this follows Calvin's doctrine of the dual dynamic in revelation.

Spirit. Only then, as a result of Divine election and action, may the human person be said to be able to, in a qualified sense, elect God,[260] and exercise autonomy. Thus, human freedom and agency are defined by Barth in their christological form.

When Barth writes on the "Miracle of Christmas," he compares Jesus' conception by the Holy Ghost with the conception of the Christian believer by the Spirit, in that both are cases of the "same preparation of man for God by God Himself."[261] Again, when he explicates the claim that human creatures can never be "autonomous partners or workmates with God" in revelation and the gift of faith, he argues that, "man's existence is involved only as the humanity of Christ is necessarily involved in the doctrine of the incarnation."[262] This approach raises the concerns outlined in the section on "trinitarian methodology" in section III.04) of Chapter 1, relating to the use of the Spirit's role in the Incarnation as the paradigm for Divine-human indwelling. As was argued there, the disanalogy with Jesus' relation to the Spirit as the exemplar of Divine-human indwelling is that in orthodox theology Jesus has been considered to be the *Logos en sarx*. According to Chalcedon the subject of the person of Jesus Christ is the Divine *Logos*, even if the mind, contra Apollinarius, is human. In one sense Jesus is just another human being, who shares our common humanity. In another sense, as Logos He differs from another human person in kind. In the relation between God and the believer there are *two subjects* and two centres of agency, with the qualification that the human centre is never wholly "independent" from the Divine ground of being. To project the Divine-human relation in the Incarnation onto the Divine indwelling of the human is to treat humanity in an *instrumental* way, and not to allow it to have a fully dialogical role. Barth's comparison relegates the role of humanity to the purely passive, without its own subjecthood. The instrumentality of Barth's concept of the place of the creature is clearly evident: "The creaturely is made serviceable to the divine and does actually serve it. It is used by God as His organ or instrument."[263]

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[259] ibid., IV/1, p.36.
[260] ibid., II/2, p.177.
[261] ibid., I/2 pp.199-200.
[262] ibid., p.235.
[263] ibid., IV/2, p.557.

In *Church Dogmatics* IV/I Barth writes that, "it is not a matter of proposing and doing something for ourselves, but of following Him [Jesus], of repeating His decision."[264] Hence, Barth says, "It is in His conversion that we are engaged."[265] Yet, how can Jesus require conversion as the *Logos en sarx*? For what does Jesus have to undergo *metanoia*? It is true that Jesus' humanity, as participating in humanity in general, does bear the marks of original sin, but the *Logos en sarx* restores the dislocation of the human from the Divine. Jesus is tempted but he does not sin. Jesus does not undergo a process of sanctification, although one may say that His awareness of His Divine mission develops throughout the Gospel narratives.

The "repetition" of which Barth talks, is not a mere *imitatio* of Christ, if this means becoming a mere copy or clone of Jesus: "His [the human creature's] own nature and thinking and willing and feeling, both in general and in detail, is not lost."[266] Yet, Barth has not shown how this is the case. It is certainly difficult to square with his language of "compulsion," "impelling," "total determination" of the human creature by God.[267] Christ's life is indeed normative for the Christian, a universal model, but one which is to be appropriated in a way which respects human particularity and agency. The question which is raised of Barth's account is, whether it really leaves enough room for human agency, identity and particularity.

II.02) Critique.

II.0201.) "Determined self-determination" and "Total Determination".

In the *Church Dogmatics* I/1, Barth argues in response to Heinrich Scholz's postulates of science, that although theology does not consider contradictions to be irremovable, he does not definitely opt for their removal.[268] For Barth theology must embrace contradictions and is incapable of total systematic representation. *Prima facie* "determined self-determination" appears contradictory, holding together a claim about the freedom of human agency with a form of determinism. Is this a mere form of Theological

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[264] ibid, IV/1, p.745.
[265] ibid..
[266] The almost narcissistic overtones of Barth's view of the imitatio of discipleship comes out in this remark: "The master acquires a pupil, a servant, a scholar, a follower, in whom he finds himself again." ibid., I/2, p.276.
[267] ibid..
[268] See Carl F.H. Henry's discussion in *God, Revelation and Authority* Vol.1, Chapters 12, 14, p.232ff..

Compatibilism? When Barth talks of being "totally determined" he does not mean determination entailed by creation or conservation, but christological determination brought about by the Spirit. For the Compatibilist personal identity may, in part, be defined as ownership of a particular mental and bodily causal chain which constitutes the life of a person over a period of time. Yet Barth envisages intervention in this causal chain in a manner over and above the determination of the causal web of creation, Divine conservation and of the general conditions determining choice.

Barth would fail to meet one of the criteria of freedom outlined in Chapter 1: *freedom from constraint*. Such a criterion is often illustrated in the philosophical literature by thought-experiments involving, what Dan Dennett calls, "the bogeymen" of human freedom: "the invisible jailer," the "nefarious neurosurgeon," the "hideous hypnotist," and the "peremptory puppeteer."[269] In all these scenarios a person is controlled by the intervention of an external force, and this is agreed to result in a diminution of human freedom and responsibility. Barth's God appears to intervene in a similar manner, admittedly according to Christians for the good, but follows the pattern, as regards the means of intervention, of the "bugbears" and "bogeymen" of the philosophical thought-experiments. This kind of intervention

Indeed, Barth appears to conceive of the Spirit's relation to the believer as a determining one, in an even more radical way than the constraints of a master or other temporal authority.[270] One's very noetic structure is determined by the special intervention of the Spirit.[271] By use of the term "intervention" here I do not intend to deny God's position as the ground of our being, but merely wish to maintain that God has granted human agency relative autonomy. Hence, the distinction between the determination of the general conditions in which free will is exercised, such as the created world, and human agency's proximate or local control of its action. The uninvited direct control of the latter would constitute an "intervention."

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[269] D.C. Dennett, *Elbow Room: The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting*. (Cambridge (USA): MIT Press, 1984), pp.6-10.
[270] See Exposition I) above.
[271] See Exposition I.) above.

Stuart D. McLean argues that the accusation that the human person is absorbed into God on Barth's account, is offset if we recall his position that: "1) the relationship of the Spirit to the whole man and 2) the distinction between the function of the Spirit in creation, providence (preservation), and redemption."[272] I do not see how this helps us here, for my argument is precisely with Barth's account of the role of the Spirit in redemption.[273] McLean seems to be arguing that a *period* of "total determination" by the Spirit might be justified within the larger context of God's work in conserving human existence, which upholds the integrity of human agency. This merely raises the question as to how a relative autonomy granted to creatures may be upheld at one point and forsaken the next, without undermining creaturely integrity. The position also fails to draw a sufficient distinction between the nature of Divine action in conservation and redemption.

Perhaps, Augustine's distinction between being *forced* to do something and being *compelled* to do it,[274] and his attempt to reconcile compulsion and freedom, will aid Barth's position at this point. According to Augustine, when one is forced to do something by a greater external power action (or happenings) takes place without will. I fall off the top of the mountain because I am pushed. My will is simply bypassed; the action or event is involuntary. This sounds very similar to description of the "Divine Fiat" view. Alistair McFadyen explains the second term of the distinction:

> Compulsion, on the other hand, does not overcome, but directs, constrains and utilises will Far from rendering will inoperative, compulsion engages will. Here the power which compels operates internally as well as externally; it engages internal motivations and the structure of intentionality in willing whilst constricting the range of possible actions.[275]

McFadyen gives two examples. First, most people seem compelled to will their own happiness.[276] The second example involves a person who is compelled to shoot someone as a result of an overwhelming threat from a third party. In this case the will is engaged,

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[272] S.D. McLean, *Humanity in the Thought of Karl Barth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1981), p.44.
[273] McLean is countering the position of Arnold Come who argues that Barth's doctrine of creation does not provide humanity with substantial created integrity.
[274] Augustine, *On the Spirit and the Letter*, 31.
[275] A. E. McFadyen, *Bound to Sin. Abuse, Holocaust and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), p. 183.
[276] "[W]ill is here engaged precisely where there is no choice. In short, Augustine's claim is that we do not suppose there to be an absence of willing to be happy when we suppose it to be a part of our human condition to be unable to will otherwise." ibid., p.181.

even if it is so unwillingly.[277] McFadyen describes the form of compulsion involved in faith:

> Faith is unlike the above example only in that its compulsion is not unwilling but consensual (on account of the spirit of love instilled by the Holy Spirit). In place of the restriction of choice through circumstances, in faith choice is restricted in the will's single-minded devotion which disempowers the power of competing attractions to motivate. In faith there is conformity between will and compelled desire. For there is no place outside of this orientation towards God and the good on which the will can stand to survey competing possibilities. In faith, the will is compelled but, claims Augustine, it is also free..... because it is compelled in movement towards God and the good. Freedom is here defined as freedom to do and will the good.[278]

I am less convinced than MacFadyen is that the "genius" of this distinction is able to reconcile grace and freedom. The outcome is at the least muddy. For a start the "consensual" nature of the relationship seems to be undercut by the appeal to an unspecified prior action of grace, the infusion of the spirit of love (*prevenient* grace). The question is therefore begged: how may the process be consensual when one's consent stems from a compulsion of the will which is directly caused by an external power, namely, the Spirit, without any prior consent? There is a very real danger that consensual compulsion will simply collapse into *forced* action and hence the "Divine Fiat" view. If my consent is compelled through direction causation, without any participation of the human personality in reaching that state, then my compulsion, although involving the will in its desire for an end, is involuntary in origination. Perhaps, the Spirit's moving of the will to a compulsion towards God and the good is carried out in a way which is consensual and participatory, but that needs to be specified. That is precisely what the Personalist model proposed in the next three Chapters attempts to do.

Freedom defined as "freedom to and will the good" appears to introduce another type of argument, a "greater good" style argument. God is justified in causing humans (the means) to consent to a state of compulsion towards Him because the end is greater good. This type of argument in this context begs the question: why does God not simply create His creatures with such an unassailable compulsion instead of undertaking salvation history to

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[277] "'Unwilling' denotes to Augustine, not *absence* of will, as if it were a synonym for 'involuntary,' but a *division* of will, a situation wherein we are compelled to will against our will." ibid., p.182.
[278] ibid., p. 184.

do so? Finally, there is a third argument which comes into McFadyen's rendering of Augustine, namely, that contrary Pelagius, the human will is not poised in a state of "neutrality and equilibrium" with the capacity of equal choice between good and evil. Compulsion is not an exceptional state of the human will, but actually its norm. The only question is what power does the compelling, sin or God? If compulsion is the norm, then it would seem that some kind of causal change in order to alter human orientation, or compulsion to will the good, is actually a necessary Divine action. In this context, there appears nothing unpalatable about the Divine causal action which brings about compulsion without consent, as there is no alternative. Yet, does such a position, which offers an either/or choice between, on the one hand, a naive conception of the "neutrality and equilibrium" of the human will, and on the other, a view of the normative compulsion of the will, really meet the reality of the human condition? I am disinclined to think it does; it fails to capture the interactive and participatory nature of human relations with the Divine. A Personalist model of Divine-human relations will be developed precisely to cover such an explanatory hole, from which to return in more detailed fashion to these issues in Chapter 5. For now, one may conclude that Augustine's position as explicated by McFadyen has not offered Barth's position more explanatory clarity and power. More needs to be said, and perhaps differently.

II.0202.) Formal Human Freedom and Substantive Freedom of Proper Fulfilment.

It will be recalled that Gunton at the outset posed the question of whether critics of Barth "simply operate with different preconceptions," or, one might add, different conceptions of freedom. Perhaps, we ought to be clear what Barth's conception of freedom is: "Barth uses the term *freedom* for a special use of will - when thought, will, desire, and awareness are efficaciously related to the reality of God's redemptive action, as well as freedom as self-determination."[279] The question is left hanging as to how freedom as self-determination and a liberated freedom in relation to God, "freedom *for*," are related when the Spirit appears to have such a determining role in subjective revelation.

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[279] McLean, p.53.

It is clear that the only freedom and autonomy that Barth is prepared to fully recognise is reconciled freedom, "freedom *for* God" created by God,[280] and the autonomy given in the Divine election of the human.[281]

> The freedom and subjectivity of man is constituted in his being called to responsibility before God, in the act of his relationship to God... This statement is equivalent to saying that man's freedom and subjectivity is constituted in Jesus Christ, in whom alone man is related to God.[282]

Equally Barth would reject that this leads to a breach of freedom *from constraint* and is essentially causal in mode.[283] We are back to Gunton's question of why there is still disbelief! One reason is that Barth does not draw the distinction and hence does not explain the relationship between, what we have called, *formal* human freedom and *substantive* freedom of proper fulfilment.[284] Barth, as we have seen, only recognises the *substantive* freedom as "freedom *for* God" created by God. The fact that Christ and the Spirit present humanity with the true content and substance of human freedom, and hence its proper fulfilment, I take to be an incontrovertible claim of the Christian faith. The point that has to be reckoned with is that the Christian *content* and *telos* is bestowed upon a *formal* human freedom which has been granted to humanity at creation, which has its own relative autonomy.[285]

II.0203) Applying the Criteria of Freedom and Personal Identity.

It has already been argued that Barth's account is not compatible with the criterion of freedom *from constraint*, elucidated in Chapter 1. In this section other criteria of freedom and personal identity, outlined in Chapter 1, section I.0I3), are applied to Barth's account. The determination of the person by the Spirit in the gift of faith, does not stem from an

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[280] See Gunton, "The triune God and the freedom of the creature," p.50.
[281] ibid., p.51. Barth, II/2.
[282] Macken, p.59.
[283] "[God] affirms and approves and recognises the autonomous actuality and therefore the autonomous activity of the creature as such. He does not play the part of tyrant towards it." Barth, *Church Dogmatics* III/3, p.92. Compare this also to his earlier pronouncement: "...the sovereignty of His love, which did not will to exercise mechanical force, to move the immobile from without, to rule over puppets or slaves, but willed rather to triumph in faithful servants and friends, not in their overthrow, but in obedience, in their own free decision for him." ibid. II/2, p.178.
[284] For definitions of these terms see Chapter 1, sc. I.0I3).
[285] The mistake which some apologists for Barth make, is to assume that the only alternative to the Barthian position is a host of philosophical undesirables from Fichtean Idealism, Existentialism, to an Enlightenment libertarianism. See for example, Gunton, "The trinue God and the freedom of the creature," p.57. This is clearly a philosophical extreme, if not a straw horse, a version of the *causa sui* fallacy mentioned in Chapter 1. The question is not a matter of the denial of the formation of human character or action, nor even its determination. The issue concerns the *manner* in which human character and action is formed or determined.

intrinsic principle of the agent. We are not free in any way to respond to God until faith has been bestowed, nor are we free to acknowledge the gift. These are both actions which are under the control of God to such an extent that his control extends beyond a determination of our motivational structures to our very noetic organisation. Hence, the integrity or relative autonomy of the agent's intellect and will, the very source of human free will, is put under question.

Barth's account also has adverse effects in relation to the category of personal identity. In terms of *qualitative* identity, it is not clear, given the degree and manner of Divine intervention which Barth postulates, that a human subject could keep hold of her sense of self, or psychological stability, during subjective revelation. If the Spirit "totally determines" me for a period of time, some account needs to be given of how psychological coherence is maintained, that is, how a person's sense of self is not simply overwhelmed by the influx of Divine action. As regards numerical identity, if the Spirit "totally determines" me surely my identity is displaced by another subject. If there is such an intervention, a person would not be able to relate a coherent story about himself, as Lucas claims we must if we are to ensure personal identity from the first-person perspective. The controlling subject is the Spirit, the human subject is completely bypassed until a later stage. Hence, Barth's account can be said to render a similar conclusion to Brown's thesis that the Spirit becomes subject, admittedly not permanently, but in the event of conversion. The Spirit brings about a real *qualitative* change of identity without apparent invitation or sanction.

The fact that Barth adopts a more participatory and active conception of human agency in *Church Dogmatics* IV/4, is a pyhrric victory. Not only does it lead to quite unorthodox ecclesiological conclusions concerning the sacraments and the identity of the Church, denying the human any mediatorial role in Divine action, but its claims for the "autonomy" of human agency are unsatisfactory. John Macken provides the reasoning to support this point:

> The human being has a proper sphere of activity [on Barth's account]. But this is admitted at the cost of allowing nothing of ultimate significance to happen within this sphere. Ultimate is the action of God alone. Barth takes

> this principle so far as to deny to the concrete expression of Revelation itself within the human sphere its character as divine action.[286]

The conclusion to be reached is not that *Church Dogmatics* IV/4, by some dialectical manoeuvre, corrects a previous imbalance in Barth's conception of the Divine-human relationship. Rather it is an extension of his original position, and the unfortunate theological results of his position in IV/4, merely pass a retroactive judgement on the imbalance of his conception of the Divine-human relationship as a whole.

II.0204) The Use of Causal not Personal Language.

As has been argued above, a distinction can be drawn between bringing about change in a *personal* way, "to persuade" or "to affect," and instituting change in an *impersonal* or causal mode, in the sense of efficient causation. It is my contention that Barth when he gives an account of the outpouring of the Spirit in subjective revelation adopts, intentionally or unintentionally, a *causal* model. This point seems quite evident, as we have seen already, from the nature of the language that Barth uses. For example, his talk of the human person being "totally determined," "taken and bound and ruled," and his use of the master-slave language. Moreover, Barth is quite happy referring to human persons as "objects" of God's action. Thus, he talks of human beings in Christian redemption as God's "property."[287] Notice that this does not refer simply to God's relation to us as Creator and Conserver.

Although Barth has avoided using the "semi-causal" concept of grace at a christological level,[288] as Colin Gunton has pointed out, the same is less clear at the pneumatological level. In terms of the Spirit's relation to Jesus he uses the language of compulsion, rather than liberation, at one point speaking of 'the Spirit who controls this man.'[289] Gunton comments that the hypostatic union requires that the Divine nature does not subvert the human:

> If the divine being, action and consciousness so pervade the human being of the saviour, the resources for characterising his action as free human action

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[286] Macken, p.181.
[287] K. Barth writes: "God now takes over the responsibility for us. We are now His property, and He has the disposal of us." *Dogmatics in Outline*. (London: SCM Press, 1966), p.151. Compare this with *Church Dogmatics* IV/3, p.538: "His control, as that of the owner over his possession....".
[288] Barth, *Church Dogmatics* IV/3, p. 173.
[289] ibid., IV/2, p. 347.

> are suppressed. But might not the same or similar be suspected of the Spirit who 'controls this man'?[290]

For Gunton this is a sign of Barth's lack of a developed pneumatology.[291] It may equally be said that it is consistent with the causal language he uses in relation to the Spirit's role in subjective revelation.

Stuart McLean defends Barth against the charge of operating with a causal model by referring back to, what I have called above, Barth's *two stage movement* in the application of Christian redemption. As a whole, McLean argues, this two stage movement does constitute a *dialogical-dialectical* model of the Divine-human relationship. Barth's term is "*Entsprechung*," the correspondence between God's action in love and humanity's subsequent response.[292] That there is this structure in Barth should be noted, but it is too linear in form, too chronological to be truly dialogical. It involves the joining together of two "*one-way*" relationships. In, what I shall call stage 1 (subjective revelation), the human person is not treated as a subject but merely as an object. The Spirit's causal intervention occurs without any concern to first illicit consent or response: human subjectivity is bypassed with the intent of establishing the conditions for "true" exercise of one's freedom and agency. Barth means by "object," not inanimate entity, but refers rather to a *passive-active* distinction. God is first active, the subject, the human passive, the object posited by God. Only then is the human active, responsible before God, able "to posit itself and therefore be subject."[293] However, the real question is *how* God is active and from my exposition of Barth above it should be clear that God's mode of action is causal. The required change in the human person takes place as a result not of persuasion or personal presence, but through direct, uninvited causal intervention which only makes room for a human response at a later stage. As John Oman writes, direct causal action fails to take the

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[290] C.E.Gunton, "A Systematic Triangle. Hegel, Kierkegaard, Barth and the Question of Ethics," *unpublished paper* (Written for a conference of the Research Institute in Systematic Theology, King's College London, March 1999), p.7.

[291] The charge is expanded upon in Gunton, "God the Holy Spirit," pp.105-6. Thomas Smail argues that in Barth the Spirit is "functionally subordinate to the Son" T. Smail, "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," in *Beyond Christendom Essays on the Centenary of the Birth of Karl Barth.* ed. by Allison Park, (Pennsylvannia: Pickwick Publications, 1986), pp.87-110.

[292] McLean explicates the point: "God is a subject, and man can be considered an object. On the other hand, man is subject, having been addressed by God, distinguished from Him, and given His grace, as He responds to God as object. Thus both God and man are subject in one sense and object in another. The intersubjectivity of the interaction of grace (*charis*) and thanksgiving (*eucharistia*) is the history of the God-man relationship and constitutes the content of the being of man." McLean, p.31.

[293] Barth, III/2, p.192.

workings of the human personality seriously or allow for it to appropriate external information to itself:

> No really personal aid can be of purely external operation, but must call forth a response from within. It cannot even be direct in any way, but must pass round so as to embrace the giver and receiver in one fellowship.[294]

Stuart McLean is persistent in his claim that Barth's model of the *metamorphosis* of the human is indeed personal:

> The action of the Spirit and the Word may evoke but do not necessitate a response.... Thus the "causal" connection between God and man is not a straight cause-and-effect schema but the peculiar interaction, analogous to the complex occurrence when words are used, when a person is called or named. This interpersonal, interverbal, and interactional nexus establishes the basis for subjectivity and spontaneity of the "call" and "answer" more characteristic of an exchange of words than anything else.[295]

However, the language that we have seen Barth employ and the account of subjective revelation is far from dialogical. When I "call" or "name" someone I do not first enter into their minds to condition their response. Yet, this is precisely what Barth's Spirit does. The Spirit does not call or exhort us in a way which gives us space to maintain the integrity of our agency. The Spirit actually intervenes without invitation at the heart of our personal being, to condition the response; the acknowledgement is an "acknowledged acknowledgement." How can this be said to represent an "interpersonal, interverbal, and interactional nexus," as we know it? The fact that a more dialogical model may be in operation at a later stage in Barth's account of the Divine-human relationship, hardly assists us in conceiving of the earlier stage as anything other than causal in operation.

II.0205) Theological Difficulties: "*Das Nichtige*." Barth on the Rejection of God.

Barth's account also faces the theological problem of explaining why some believe and others do not.[296] He is prepared to shroud the whole process of subjective revelation in

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[294] Oman, p.47.

[295] ibid., p.33.

[296] Eleonore Stump makes a similar point to the underlining problem in this section: if God could in fact make a person morally good, why would he not do so for all persons? How could a good God fail to impart such a benefit to all human beings, so that there would never be any moral evil on earth and no one would ever be brought to hell?" E. Stump, "Sanctification , Hardening of the Heart and Frankfurt's Concept of Free Will," *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol.85 (1988), p.412. Compare this also with John Oman thought: "If grace is this kind of strong hand upon the individual, we can no more approve its goodness and wisdom: because a grace which can ignore our moral independence can have no excuse for allowing our moral deficiencies." Oman, p.67.

mystery: "we do not know how it happened."[297] The rejection of God's revelation and grace is inexplicable, relegated by Barth to the realm of "das Nichtige." *Das Nichtige* is that which has been brought to nothing by God's declaration of "No" in relation to that which is not part of His good creation. This *Nihil* is what Barth terms, an "impossible possibility," because the possibility of evil is excluded from God's work of creation, and as such has no positive reason for existence. The result of this line of thought is that a person's rejection of grace is for Barth an impossible and inexplicable abuse of their freedom. This in itself presents a contradiction, because Barth wishes to deny that a human person is free before being brought to faith. Such a position also contravenes Barth's own statement that the choice between faith and unbelief is an "illusion," which begs the question how a person can actually then be free to reject God.

Barth's reference to *Das Nichtige* as the "impossible possibility" is itself confusing. He cannot be referring to logical or conceptual impossibility, for it is still a possibility that a person rejects God. Neither is it a matter of factual impossibility, for it is an empirical fact that many people hear the Gospel and still do not believe. Perhaps, what Barth is referring to here is rational impossibility, namely, that to reject God's call goes against all good reason. This seems more plausible. However, it should be remembered that a person, according to Barth, has no choice in relation to the bestowal of faith and even the acknowledgement of the gift of faith is determined by the Spirit. Further, Barth refers to the "necessity of faith." How is one in a position to reject the gift of faith once it has been given and acknowledged, after such a degree of uninvited intervention on the part of the Spirit? It appears that faith, once it has been bestowed, is not irresistible, and the efficacy of the Spirit, after its primary intervention, is not wholly efficacious. Yet Barth asserts that despite the account of subjective revelation that he has given, the work of the Word and the Spirit call forth and initiate a response, they do not necessitate it.[298] If the rejection of faith from this perspective appears an "impossible possibility," it is because Barth's account of the gift of faith and the role of the Spirit has made the rejection of God seem implausible, an impossibility. That this is the case and that people do appear to reject God suggests that it is Barth's account which is responsible for this apparent contradiction.

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[297] Barth, I/2, p.267, cf. pp.233-235.

[298] Barth writes that God "...has not therefore made obedience physically necessary or disobedience physically impossible." ibid., III/1, p.266.

However, Barth's concept of the possibility of the rejection of God is interpreted, he has not provided a particularly convincing explanation of how and why people reject God, which is directly linked to his inadequate account of human agency and identity in relation to the Divine in the event of subjective revelation.

II.0206) Theological Difficulty: Equation of the Orders of Creation and Reconciliation.

In terms of the context of Barth's discussion of the Spirit's involvement in subjective revelation in relation to Christian doctrine, his account presupposes a too radical division, as regards Christian anthropology, between created goodness and redeemed humanity, created freedom and redeemed freedom. This is not because Barth posits a separation as such between the doctrines of creation and redemption. Indeed, John Macken argues that Barth connects the two doctrines to the extent that the doctrine of creation is thoroughly subordinated to that of reconciliation:

> Barth's treatment of Creation and nature was also too narrowly conceived, that is purely in function of a relationship to grace and Reconciliation. Thus Creation was emptied of its complexity and richness and treated all too exclusively as a mere outer presupposition of the Covenant, as the bare stage (theatrum) on which a drama is played whose actors and plot belong exclusively to another order.[299]

This stems from Barth's rejection of the *analogia entis* in favour of the *analogia relationis*, and his determination to apply a "Christocentric principle" and "constriction"[300] to human freedom and identity. Freedom is only defined as *freedom for* God created by God, constituted by Jesus Christ, while created freedom is ignored and relativised. One might say the same of the whole created order.

> Barth saw too late that the universality of his construction, in which everything is derived from above, from Revelation in Christ, demanded the integration of human existence in the world, of history and empirical knowledge.... The fault does not lie in the assertion that we owe our being and our world exclusively to God, which is the doctrine of Creation, but in the ungenerous and anxious depreciation of God's gifts to us in Creation out of anxiety that we might claim them for ourselves.[301]

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[299] Macken, p.170.

[300] These terms are used by Macken, pp.81, 148.

[301] ibid., p.170. Macken continues: "For Barth, the ontological and noetic orders had to run parallel. Thus his restrictive theses showed themselves in both areas, on the one hand in his axiomatic restrictions on human knowledge (of which his rejection of all natural theology was the cause and the symptom) and on the other in his ontology, in which he tried to derive all significant statements about human nature and worldly reality from statements about Jesus Christ." ibid., p.171.

The reason why the Spirit is required to have such a domineering role in the gift of faith is precisely because humanity is in a state of radical sin and true humanity is only to be found in the "true man". As created freedom and redeemed freedom are discontinuous, there is nothing left, but for the Spirit to intervene in the human by "Divine fiat." As a result created humanity is bypassed in the move to redeemed humanity. This is also why Barth neglects an attempt to reconcile his theological conceptions of freedom with common sense intuitions concerning freedom and personal identity. Such a critique of Barth will only be properly substantiated when we turn, in Chapter 5, to examine the question of the extent of sin.

II.0207) Theological Difficulties: The Charge of Gnostic Dualism.

There is yet another problematic facet to Barth's account, in relation to the doctrine of God. The discontintuity between created and redeemed freedom, setting aside at one level his equation of the two orders, forces us to posit a distinction between God the creator and redeemer. This is precisely a tendency in Western theology which David Burrell warns against: the separation of the doctrines of creation and redemption, which Burrell claims leads to the dominance of a naturalistic attitude towards the world,[302] and inversely, one may say in the case of Barth, in relation to the question of subjective revelation, to a creation which can only passively wait for the second stage of Divine action, redemption, to which it contributes nothing. This leads to a form of Gnostic dualism, the positing of two orders of reality, the created and the redeemed, one of which, the created, is devalued, disconnected and subsumed by the true manifestation of reality in the redeemed order. Notice that what is being argued here is not that Barth intentionally institutes a separation between the doctrines of creation and redemption. This would clearly be mistaken in light of the pivotal role he gives to the doctrine of the covenant. What is being argued is that from the perspective of his account of subjective revelation certain theological presuppositions arise, which in practice lead to the separation of creation and redemption. The contradiction at the heart of Barth's theology, for although he explicitly argues for the relation of the doctrines of creation and redemption from the *locus* of his doctrine of the covenant, this is elsewhere undermined by his own theological epistemology, his emphasis on the transcendence of God, the depravity of humankind, his less than satisfactory

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[302] David B. Burrell, *Freedom and Creation in Three Traditions* (Notre Dame Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

account of the relationship of grace and nature, and his attempt to conceive of reality in terms of his christological principle.

III.) Conclusion.

It has been the purpose of this Chapter to illustrate the type of theological position, regarding our subject matter, to which this thesis seeks an alternative. Both theologians in this Chapter have raised issues which will remain with us throughout the development of this thesis. Brown's contribution has been to highlight the importance of the mystical tradition in explicating the Spirit's indwelling and the employment of the subject-object distinction. Barth sets the parameters for the course that has to be plotted, avoiding the twin dangers of anthropocentrism, "subjectivism from below," and christomonism, "subjectivism from above." He affirms the place of revelation in Christian epistemology, and maintains a quite proper distinction between the Divine and human subject. His conception of freedom as a freedom *for* God, reminds us that the definitions of freedom and personal identity given in Chapter 1, need to interact with a Christian conception of *substantive* freedom, the *telos* of human freedom (Chapter 5). The relation of the doctrines of creation and redemption are raised, a subject to which we will have to return in Chapter 8. Barth prompts us to keep in mind the *liberative* character of the Spirit's action and the disabling effects of sin. The *substantive* freedom granted by the action of the Spirit, and the prior human blindness caused by sin, both mean that a Divine *initiative* in transforming the human person is required. Pelagianism is not an option taken seriously in this thesis. Rather it will be argued that this Divine initiative is indeed integral, but may be expressed in terms other than those employed by Barth, ones which are more consistent with the personal nature of the relationship between the Divine and the human. In drawing the negative conclusion that the "Divine Fiat" view is to be opposed, we move forward in the hope of seeking an alternative, with which to engage many of the salient points raised by Barth and Brown.

CHAPTER 3.

A PERSONALIST MODEL OF THE SPIRIT-HUMAN RELATION.

It is the purpose of this chapter to begin to put forward an alternative to the "Divine Fiat" view. The alternative position to be elucidated in this chapter will be one which utilises the model-theory presented in Chapter 1, to advocate a "Personalist model" of Spirit-human relations, that is, one based on an extended analogy between interpersonal human relationships and that of the Spirit-human relationship. The term 'Personalist' is employed to signify that the model's source is in the domain of human personal relationships. No reference is intended to the specific school of philosophy called "Personalism," initiated in America in the late 19/20th century, for which "person" is the ontological ultimate term and "personality" the fundamental explanatory principle.[303] The question which this Chapter poses is whether a "Personalist model" can offer a more satisfactory account of how the Spirit's activity in Christian *metamorphosis* is compatible with human freedom and personal identity.

It is also important to emphasise that the Personalist Model which will be presented below, although influenced by the revival of personal categories in religious explanation in the work of Martin Buber, is certainly not advancing a thesis in the train of his "Dialogical Personalism." Famously, Buber draws a distinction between "personal," "I-Thou" relations between persons and with forms of nature, and "impersonal," "I-It" relations. "I-It" relations refer to, what philosophers would call, "subject-object" relations, which have the following characteristics: an ordering and classification of the object, a lack of personal reciprocity, a functional relation, being general rather than unique and exclusive, set within a spatio-temporal causal context, measurable and common to all.[304] In contradistinction, the "I-Thou" relation is a "subject-subject" relation, not mediated by categories or classification, not causally determined, hence not governed by spatio-temporal categories,

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[303] Examples of philosophers who were in the forefront of American Personalism are: Borden Parker Browne (1847-1910), and Edgar Sheffield Brightman (1884 - 1954). For a survey article see Erazim Kohak, "Personalism: Towards a Philosophical Delineation," *Personalist Forum* Vol. 13 (1997), pp. 3 -11. It would be interesting to undertake a study of the use of the British theologians J.R. Illingworth's, R.C. Moberly's, J. Oman's and H.H. Farmer's use of the concept of "personality," which is used in their work and to examine to what extent philosophical personalism was of influence.

[304] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*. trans. by Walter Kaufmann (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1970), pp.80ff.

but free, immediate and direct.[305] It cannot be fully analysed or described, but only exemplified. It is reciprocal and symmetrical, and involves the relation of the "whole person."[306] As we shall see below, this distinction does prefigure some of the characteristics of Vincent Brummer's and his followers' distinction between *personal* and *impersonal* relations, yet is also distinct from them.[307]

Critiques of Buber's position have effectively exhibited its limitations. Steven Katz has argued that Buber's religious thought is tainted by an epistemology, which follows the pattern of Kantianism, leading to the subjectivism of a "species or mutant of idealism."[308] At the heart of this is Buber's radical dichotomy between "I-Thou" and "I-It" relations. Yet, interpersonal relations require knowledge by description or objectivity concepts, what Buber wishes to confine to "I-It" relations, so that, as Katz writes, "a minimal condition for employing dialogical language meaningfully [necessitates] some identifying skeleton of the notion of *Thou* must be given and this will require understanding the indissoluble tie between *what* the other is and *who* the other is."[309] Let us note that the distinction made in Chapter 2 between a *causal* and a *personal* modus operandi, and hence the similar move made by Brummer and his followers, is in no way dependent upon Buber's extreme dichotomy, positing, as he does, the "personal" as "a-spatial, a-temporal, wholly non-sensual, and non-experiential," that is, "divorced from all behavioural material predicates."[310] In this thesis, the "personal/impersonal" distinction does not refer to ontology or metaphysics, as such, but to the modes of operation of an agent, with particular reference to the Spirit.

I.) The Personalist Model and the Christian Tradition.

It is one of the presuppositions of this thesis that Christian Scripture provides strong evidence not only for the distinct reality of the Spirit, but also the *personal* nature of the Spirit, and the other Divine *hypostaseis*. The term "personal" is taken to refer to the ability

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[305] ibid., p.59ff.
[306] ibid.
[307] See the "*personal conception of God*" set out in, G.van den Brink & Marcel Sarot, "Contemporary Philosophical Theology," in *Understanding the Attributes of God*, eds. van den Brink & Sarot (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), pp.27-8.
[308] Katz, "Martin Buber's Epistemology", p.147; "Dialogue and Revelation."
[309] Ibid., p.151. Katz goes on to comment that in personal relationships, "I do not just have a spontaneous, content-less, *Thou* relation to her in some space time vacuum." ibid.
[310] Ibid., p 152.

to have certain intentional states, analogous to human intentional mental states, to be able to relate to human persons or other personal existents in a dialogical manner, without the need to revert to the language of consciousness.[311] My concern in this section is not to go over such well-trodden ground, but to examine whether or not a "Personalist Model" has any pedigree within the Christian tradition.

As we have seen in chapter 1, in explicating the doctrine of the Trinity, Richard of St. Victor and later Bonaventura used analogies with interpersonal human love. They wrote at a time when there was a development of a theology of love.[312] David Brown's work, examined in the last chapter, highlighted the importance of the Christian mystical tradition in the debate. Mysticism is not all of a kind, but an identifiable strand within the Christian mystical tradition, "bridal mysticism,"[313] readily employs personalist metaphors. It finds its inspiration partly in Scripture:[314]

> In the Hebrew Scriptures, God is described as the unfailing lover of his people Israel, while in the New Testament, God, the Father of Jesus, not only is loving, but is identified with Love itself (1 John 4:8). Both Christianity and Judaism, then, conceive of God not just as some impersonal Highest Good, but as the transcendentally personal Creator and Goal of human beings.[315]

It is especially the Song of Songs and Hosea, in Hebrew Scripture, which classically gave inspiration to the development of "personalist" language in the Christian tradition as regards the God-human relation, although there is some debate as to whether this was the

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[311] In trinitarian theology I prefer to use the term "personal" in conjunction with a suitable noun (e.g. subsistence) to refer to the trinitarian *hypostaseis*, rather than using the term "person," which has too many anthropomorphic connotations. See Fermer, p.178 n.86.

[312] See the Cistercian tradition, for example: Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermones in Cantica Canticorum*; *Liber de Diligendo Deo*; Aelred of Rievaulx, *Speculum Caritatis* and *De Spirituali Amicitia*; William of St. Thierry, *De Natura et Dignitate Amoris*.

[313] Maas, p.94. Examples of this tradition are: Bernard of Clairvaux, William of Saint Thierry, Ramon Lull, Thomas Gallus, Jan van Ruusbroec, John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila. See also Bernard McGinn, "Love, Knowledge and Mystical Union," *Church History*, Vol.56 (1987), pp. 7-24; "God as Eros: Metaphysical Foundations of Christian Mysticism," in *New Perspectives on Historical Theology: Essays in Memory of John Meyendorff*. Ed. Bradley Nassif. (Michigan/Cambridge: Wm.B. Eerdman Publishing Company, 1996), pp.189-209; Andrew Louth, "Eros and Mysticism. Early Christian interpretation of the Song of Songs", in *Jung and the Monotheisms: Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, ed. by Joel Ryce-Menuhin (London/New York: Routledge, 1994), pp.241 - 255.

[314] As McGinn comments on the use of the language of human love in "Bridal mysticism": "They did this not only because such language was found in the Scriptures, notably the Song of Songs, but also because sexual language offered them a unique set of symbols to present experiences that were, at least according to the mystics themselves, incapable of being fully circumscribed by language." B. McGinn, "The Language of Love in Christian Mysticism and Jewish Mysticism," in *Mysticism and Language*. ed. S.T. Katz. (Oxford: OUP, 1992), p.225.

[315] McGinn, "God as *Eros*", p.205.

Song of Songs' original intention.[316] The metaphor of marriage is used widely throughout Scripture to depict the relation of God and His People,[317] and equally marriage is seen as a covenant analogous to the Divine-human covenant.[318] St. Paul uses the concept of marriage in terms of the relationship between Christ and the Church.[319] Finally, the Book of Revelation describes the exalted and returning Christ, the Lamb, as the bridegroom and the church, the new Jerusalem, as the bride.[320] These themes within Scripture have been most thoroughly pursued in "bridal mysticism." Colin Thompson makes the following remark about the use by Christian mystics of "personalist" language:

> Though transcendent, God is also personal, and has established the possibility of a deep relationship of love between himself and the individual. Such an experience drives the mystic who attempts to express it into a bold language in which love raises and binds him into union with God. He is driven to proclaim this even though it is in tension with the infinite distance between God and his creation, because he has experienced both moments of insight, celebrating in one breath the unreachable mystery of God, and in the next the closest sharing of the divine love. There is no reconciliation possible or necessary: there are the two extremes of the Christian experience of God, transcendence and immanence, and the mystic is profoundly aware of both.[321]

Louis Dupre argues, in addition, that the language of human love is used by the mystics to reflect the path to mystical union which is experienced as a dynamic "process", mirroring the often slow and painful passage of human interpersonal love.[322] The mystics are not 'literalists',[323] hence the use of paradox, and the dialectic. To translate this insight into the

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[316] Bernard McGinn, Review Article, "With the 'Kisses of the Mouth': Recent Works on the Song of Songs," *Journal of Religion*, Vol.72 (1992), pp.269-275.

[317] Examples in the Hebrew Scripture of God as faithful lover to the faithless, apostasy and prostitution of Israel are: Hosea 1.2-3.5 (the most common Hebrew root of the word love, *aheb*, is first used in Hosea); Isaiah 1.21, 50.1, 54.4-10, 62.4-5, Jeremiah 2.2, 32f., 3.1-13; Ezekiel 16.1-63, 23.1-49. In the New Testament the marriage motif Mark 2.19f., Matt.22.2, Rev.19.7, 9, 21.2, 9, 22.17.

[318] See Adrian Thatcher, *Marriage after Modernity: Christian Marriage in Postmodern Times* (Sheffield, Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), pp. 68 - 77, 222 - 225. He writes: "The use of the terms 'image' and 'symbol' to describe the relation between the human covenant of marriage and the divine covenant between God and God's people bears an ontological reference. The couple participate in the divine covenant. One becomes an expression of the other. When Christ is spoken of as the 'Bridegroom of the Church,' nuptial imagery borrowed from Eph. 5.25-27 is used as a way of achieving experiential continuity between the two covenants." ibid., p.224.

[319] See Eph. 5.23-32; II Cor.11.12.

[320] Rev.19.7; 21.2, 9; 22.17.

[321] Colin P. Thompson, *The Poet and Mystic. A study of the Cantico Espirituel of San Juan de la Cruz* (Oxford: OUP, 1997), p.164.

[322] L. Dupre, "The Christian Experience of Mystical Union," *Journal of Religion*, Vol.69, (1989), p.12.

[323] "Literalist" is being used of someone who wishes to apply, for example, sensual terminology directly to God. This, however, does not prevent some language from being used "literally", "in expressing a comparative concept of a mode of appearance." W.P. Alston, "Literal and Nonliteral in Reports of Mystical Experience," in *Mysticism and Language*, ed. by S.T. Katz (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1992), p.99. As

methodology of this thesis, they provide warrant for developing a "Personalist Model," without ever forgetting its limitations as a model. As we have already seen in our criticisms of Brown, Bridal Mystics, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, talk of a unity of will not of being. By using the metaphor of human romantic love an ontological distinction is accepted that is analogous to the separateness of human persons, which is a necessary condition of love.[324]

It is not my intention to dispense with the contributions of "bridal mysticism" in one block, but to integrate insights which may be gained from the mystical tradition within the conceptual development of a Personalist Model. There is one matter, though, with which we must immediately deal. This is the fact that in "Bridal mysticism" the Personalist model is used to describe the relationship of Christ and the believer; it is Christ who is the Bridegroom, and the soul who is the bride. This presents a problem for the subject matter of this thesis which is specifically *pneumatological*. Now, this problem might be able to be side-stepped if the Bridal Mystics just used personalist metaphors to describe the Divine-human relationship undifferentiated, but they do not. Let us take St. John of the Cross as an example. In his work he describes the Spirit in terms of a "flame of love",[325] "breath",[326] "the gentle breeze",[327] "amber",[328] and a "torrent of love".[329] None of these are personalist metaphors, but impersonal ones. How can St. John of the Cross combine such impersonal metaphors with his central personalist model of the Bride and the Bridegroom?

Alston argues, in his paper, "Mysticism and Language": "The general conclusion is that certain relatively abstract and unspecific terms can be used literally of God, and indeed can be used univocally of God and creatures. But this abstract and sketchy core must be supplemented by healthy doses of metaphorical, analogical and symbolic language before we have what is needed for a functioning religion." ibid., p.100.

[324] Separateness as a necessary condition of love is the thesis of Ilham Dilman: "I cannot really love someone with whom I have identified myself to the extent that I do not feel her to have an identity apart from mine... Without it, where the other person becomes a mere shadow or extension of one, one only loves oneself in her; and in the opposite case, where one has become no more than an extension of her one merely participates in her love of herself." I. Dilman, *Love and Human Separateness*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwells, 1987), pp. 105-6.

[325] St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*, in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. by K. Kavanaugh, O.C.D., and O. Rodriguez, O.C.D. (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991), 1.3: "This flame of love is the Spirit of its Bridegroom, who is the Holy Spirit." Notice the distinction between the Spirit and the Bridegroom (Christ); notice too, the appropriation of the Pauline pattern of describing the Spirit as the "Spirit of its Bridegroom", as Paul sometimes refers to the Spirit as the "Spirit of Christ".

[326] See *The Spiritual Canticle*, in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, 17 *passim*; 39.2,3.

[327] ibid..

[328] ibid., 18.6

[329] ibid., 26.1

There are two points which may be brought out here. First, the Holy Spirit so described has the function of preparing the ground for the relationship with the Bridegroom, and hence the personalist model is the centre-piece, whereas the impersonal metaphors are secondary, the means to a personalist end, one might say. In this way, St. John's description of the relationship of the Spirit and Christ fits well with the Johannine portrayal of the content of the relationship with the Spirit being principally christological ("take what is Mine and declare it to you"), and hence, of the mutuality between Christ and the Spirit.[330] Secondly, although impersonal metaphors are employed, they are deployed in such a way that there is a *personal* quality to the action. Hence, the language is that of extreme intimacy and personal delicacy.

> When this divine breeze strikes her [i.e. the soul, the bride], it wholly enkindles and refreshes her, quickens and awakens the will, and elevates the previously fallen appetites that were asleep to the love of God.[331]

This aura of intimacy is created by the imaginative use of sensual language, which is person-involving. The language of sense is the language of human beings. The imaginative power of poetry can turn that which is non-personal into the personally affecting, and into symbols of personal exchange. Further, what goes on in these descriptions comprises of effects on the very heart of the human personality, such as the will and knowledge. The action appears to have a *personal* quality because it has *personal effects*. This is most beautifully described in, perhaps, St. John's most powerful pneumatological metaphor, that of the breath blowing through the garden of the human soul and opening up its buds, and causing the blossoming and flourishing of its flowers:

> With his Spirit he breathes through her flowering garden, opens all these buds of virtues, and uncovers these aromatic spices of gifts, perfections, and riches; and, disclosing this interior treasure and wealth, he reveals all her beauty. And then it is something wonderful to behold and pleasant to feel: the richness of her gifts unveiled to the soul and the beauty of these flowers of virtues now in full bloom. And the fragrant scent each one with its own characteristics gives to her is inestimable.[332]

A wonderful metaphor for one of the principal roles of the Spirit in the New Testament, namely, the bringer of 'new life' and recreation.

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[330] See chapter 1 of this thesis, Sc. I.0102.
[331] *Spiritual Canticle*, 17.4, cf.37.8.
[332] ibid., 17.6.

However, there need be no necessary connection between *personal effects* and a *personal source* of those effects. To use St. John's own examples from nature, it is often the case that people are "refreshed" and "rejuvenated" by their experience of nature. So people say, "He is so much more relaxed and lively after that holiday." Or there may be personal effects on somebody who is suffering from depression when that person takes anti-depressant drugs. Non-personal causes can bring about personal effects, so there can be no rule that the presence of personal effects must be stimulated by a personal cause.

Nonetheless, St. John sees the mutuality of the "two hands" of God, to use Irenaeus' phrase, the Son and the Spirit, as assuaging this difficulty and the further concern that an impersonal metaphor implies a return to a Divine Fiat view. Thus, he posits a reciprocity and mutuality between the Bridegroom and bride. It is also the soul (bride) who is very much pictured in search of the Bridegroom. Union is union of will, not nature or essence. Finally, the controlling metaphor is that of spiritual betrothal and marriage which implies free consent. Thus, St. John writes of, what he calls, "spiritual betrothal":

> The bride must first be a door in order to receive the reinforcement of cedar wood; that is, she must hold the door of her will open to the Bridegroom so he may enter through the complete and true 'yes' of love. This is the yes of betrothal that is given before the spiritual marriage.[333]

Although, this equality is not granted to the Spirit-human relationship, sometimes it is not clear that the soul is actually aware of the action of the Spirit at all. The activity is described as 'secret,'[334] there are also occasions when the soul invites the Spirit to act: "she invokes the Holy Spirit; it is he who will dispel this dryness and sustain and increase her love for the Bridegroom."[335] One might say that the Spirit's action is sanctioned by the search for the Bridegroom. The Spirit and the Son as the "two hands" must be seen in operation together. Thus, the Bridegroom despite being the "principal lover",[336] the focus of attention and adoration of the soul, remains "hidden" and withdrawen, even in spiritual betrothal.[337] Likewise, the functions usually predicated of the Bridegroom are sometimes predicated of the Spirit as well, and vica versa.[338] On other occasions no distinction is

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[333] ibid., 20.2.
[334] *Living Flame of Love*, 3.50, *Spiritual Canticle* 1.17; 29.4.
[335] *Spiritual Canticle* 17.2.
[336] ibid., 19.6; 31.2; 32.4-5.
[337] ibid., 1 passim; 11.4: "For even in the state of union he is still hidden from her, in the bosom of the Father as we said, which is how she wants to enjoy him in the next life." ibid., 1.11.
[338] ibid., 33.4.

made, and the name "God" is used, where the activity could be predicated either to the Spirit or the Bridegroom. In sum, it is possible, despite the fact that personalist metaphors are not directly applied to the Spirit, to say that St. John safeguards the personal reality of God and the relationship with God by *primarily* using a personalist model (Bridegroom/Bride model). This is complemented by impersonal metaphors used of the Spirit, though not exclusively of the Spirit, which is a reminder that personalist language is limited and attempts to describe a greater reality. This conclusion will be further examined when, in Chapter 6, the matter of impersonal models and metaphors of the Spirit will be directly treated.

II.) A Personalist Model: Vincent Brummer and the Model of Love.

In recent philosophical theology a conceptual analysis of a Personalist model, although in a theistic not pneumatological or trinitarian form, has been offered by Vincent Brummer in his monograph, *The Model of Love*.[339] Brümmer's inclinations are generally theistic, and his commitment to the trinitarian nature of God at best "incomplete."[340] For example, there is no discussion of Augustine's account of love, nor of Richard of St. Victor or Bonaventura's analogy between the Trinity and interpersonal human love. Brümmer's initial assumption is that God is a person.[341] However, one need not find oneself caught up in this assumption, as the argument could equally take a trinitarian form, founded on a conception of a triune God of three personal *hypostaseis* in one being. Some of Brümmer's theistic points are amenable to such a position. Apart from wishing to set Brümmer's Personalist model in a trinitarian setting, other problems with his account, such as his failure to give full weight to the asymmetry involved in the Creator-creature relationship, will be brought out in the next Chapter.[342]

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[339] V. Brümmer, *The Model of Love. A philosophical theology* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993). It must be noted that Brümmer follows in the footsteps of J.R. Lucas, *Freedom and Grace* (London: SPCK, 1976). See also V. Brümmer, "Bestowed Fellowship. On the Love of God," in *Understanding the Attributes of God*, eds. G. van den Brink & Marcel Sarot (Frankfurt, Peter Lang, 1999), pp. 35-52.

[340] Brümmer's *Speaking of a Personal God* is written from a general theistic perspective. C. Schwöbel has argued that Brümmer's *The Model of Love* displays an "incomplete doctrine of the Trinity" which fails to draw out the ontological implications of a conception of a triune God, which would in fact strengthen his account of the model of love. Schwöbel, "God is Love," pp.307-28.

[341] *Speaking of a Personal God*, p.139. Note that in the introduction to this chapter a distinction was made been "person" and "personal". I do not favour Brümmer's claim that the triune God is a person.

[342] One issue which C. Schwöbel focuses on in his critique is Brümmer's belief that God needs our love in order to be love: "It is not quite clear in which sense we can still say without qualification that 'the source of love is God' (1 Jn.4.7)....Quite apart from the implications this has for a view of divine perfection it would

The triune God can be called personal because the three Divine *hypostaseis* possess attributes similar to those which are predicated of persons, such as having purposes and intentions.[343] This is hardly surprising when Christians claim that God is the fount of the truly personal or true 'personality'.[344] God is said to possess knowledge, agency, goodness, and love, all attributes which are analogous to properties of personhood. He is able to enter into a relationship with human persons, with their own rational consciousnesses and 'reactive attitudes.'[345] Scripture teaches us that we have been created to become "children of God". The life of the believer, described in the New Testament as living *coram Deo*, has all the qualities that we associate with human personal relationships: love, intimacy, sharing, interrelationship and self-sacrifice.[346] Believers are to be called 'friends,'[347] and later 'sons of God'. It is also assumed that the Spirit as a *hypostasis* of the One God is personal, and hence, when the Spirit is described in Scripture as another *parakletos*, who will 'be alongside' or 'abide' with the believer, 'teach' them (John 14.15-27) and lead them,[348] these are actions of a personal being.

Brummer wishes to base his conception of the Creator-creature relationship on the model of *loving personal human relationships* (henceforth referred to as **LPR**), which are relationships of a particularly valuable kind, the highest form of relationships we can enter into within God's creation. The constitutive elements of **LPR** are that the initiative of *both* parties is required, and that in this sense, **LPR** are *mutual* and *symmetrical.*[349] Further, it must be factually possible, according to Brummer, for either side to refuse to enter into a relationship. Thus, compulsion cannot be at the basis of the relationship. This is in

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seem that we could not say that God is eternally relational, that God is eternally personal and that God is eternally the God of love." "God is Love," p.322.

[343] See Keith Ward, "Is God a Person?" in *Christian Faith and Philosophical Theology*. eds. by G. van den Brink, L.J. van den Brom and M. Sarot (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1992), pp. 258-266.

[344] See R.C. Moberly, *Atonement and Personality* (London: John Murray, 1901), chs.VII, VIII.

[345] These are: love, respect, gratitude, resentment, indignation and hatred. The concept of 'reactive attitudes' comes from the work of Harry Frankfurt and has also been used by J.M. Fischer, *The Metaphysics of Free Will.*

[346] See I John 4.7ff., John 10.7ff, 15.9ff.

[347] John 16.15.

[348] Gal. 5.16, 25. The Spirit is said to search the hearts of believers and reprove. Scripture also refers to 'The Spirit said' (Acts 13.2; 21.11; 1Tim.4.1).

[349] The criteria of symmetry will be critically assessed in chapter 4.

contrary to Barth, and the Divine Fiat view, for whom, "There is necessarily a compulsion" of the human.[350]

Let us pause in the explication of Brummer's Personalist model, to note another reason for pursuing this avenue as an alternative to the Divine Fiat view. A paradigm example of **LPR,** romantic love, embodies the very apparent contradiction or paradox[351] that is at the heart of our *generating question*. Robert C. Solomon explains:

> Here is the paradox: the independent individual is the presupposition of love, and this independence is just what love wants to overcome and deny. The individual insists on self-definition; love demands mutual and shared definition. The individual occupies his or her space and time, but love breaks down all distance and denies the integrity of the isolated body. Love invades and occupies the body, subverts it with its own needs. Time is redefined as time together.[352]

For Solomon, Aristophanes not Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, came closest to describing the nature of romantic love, as long as we demythologise the story. Reformulated by Solomon, the goal of romantic love is fusion between two persons, but there is no matchless "Aristophanic fit," nor possibility of complete fusion. Rather, it is a question of re-envisioning oneself in relationship to another person: "an attempt to create for ourselves a sense of wholeness or completion through a union - of both body and soul - with another person."[353] We shall address the issue of how these paradoxes may be resolved when we examine Brummer's concept of "reciprocal identification," which bears a likeness to certain trinitarian concepts. For now, it is important to note the similarities between the

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[350] Barth, IV/2, p.578.

[351] What Baillie terms the "paradox of grace" (see chapter 1 of this thesis).

[352] Robert C. Solomon, *About Love: Reinventing Romance for our Times* (Maryland: Littlefield Adams Quality Press, 1994), p.65. From another angle, the case of human love provides us with a further paradox, let us call it the paradox of intimacy: "*Intimacy* is derived from the Latin *intima*, meaning 'inner' or 'innermost'. Your inside being is the real you, the you that only you can know. The problem is that you can know it only when you are being intimate with something or someone outside yourself." T.P. Malone & P.T. Malone, *The Art of Intimacy* (London: Simone & Schuster, 1987), p.19. This version of the paradox makes controversial play of an inner-outer dichotomy. Its point, though, about self-knowledge coming from interacting with others is fairly intuitive.

[353] Solomon, p.194. Solomon's account of human love is altogether very persuasive. Many of its theses are not so distant from Brümmer's. However, Solomon is too constructivist in holding (a.) that apart from the *meta*-principles underlying the nature of love which he has expounded, the basis of love can be continually re-invented. This may have some truth as referring to the flexibility required in relation to the uniqueness of every relationship, however, it comes with (b.) a radical pragmatism and relativism: there are "no absolute authorities or standards", "whatever 'works' is enough", "what is moral is determined by a negotiable set of demands"(ibid., pp.344, 346). He holds up as an exemplar of this "re-invention" of love, the relationship of J.P. Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, rather neglecting de Beauvoir's own account of the unsatisfactory nature of this relationship.

paradox involved in romantic love and the paradox contained in the *generating question*, which gives us a *prima facie* reason for thinking that the Spirit-human paradox may be usefully addressed by applying a Personalist model.

Brummer provides greater explication of the **LPR** model by contrasting it with other forms of human relationship: c*ontractual* relations and *manipulative* or *causal* relations. **LPR** are to be distinguished from *contractual* human relationships, such as those between King and baron, or employer and employee. Such relationships are often asymmetric: one party is in a greater position of power, and one party is subordinate. The parties enter into the relationship for their own calculated benefits and needs. The contract or agreement settles what is required of each partner, and lays down their stipulated rights and obligations to each other. No further commitments are required. In contractual relationships one does things for the other party whose interests are more means to the greater ends of my interests. On the other hand, in **LPR** one achieves, what Brummer calls, *reciprocal identification*: "Each partner in the relationship identifies with the other by making the interest of the other his or her own, and by pursuing this as his or her own interest."[354] My interests become your interests and vice versa. Your interests and value to me are no longer instrumental, as in the case of contractual arrangements, but intrinsic and unique. In comparison to contractual relationships where value is empirically quantifiable, and bestowed for services rendered, **LPR** grants value to the whole person, not to particular capacities possessed by that person. As J. R. Lucas writes:

> To be esteemed by another secures one's own sense of self-esteem, and gives body to one's own sense of identity.... It means that my actions matter, not only to me but also to someone else in the outside world, and that therefore, they have a significance which is not solely solipsistic.[355]

In this way **LPR** are even more significant to one's sense of *qualitative* identity, because they cannot be earned.

Finally, Brummer also distinguishes **LPR** from what he calls "manipulative relations". However benevolent the manipulator, the manipulated are still treated as objects of a one-sided relationship, not as personal agents able to enter into the dynamic of reciprocity. Paul Helm argues against J.R. Lucas' view that Augustine's conception of freedom and grace

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[354] *Speaking of a Personal God*, p.81.

involves manipulation of men by God. He claims that the use of the word "manipulation", in this context, is dangerous, given its negative connotations.

> But there are many other concepts of causal sufficiency which do not carry such unfavourable connotations as 'manipulate'. For example: 'rescue', 'rehabilitate', 'remove', 'restore', 'cure' and 'free'.[356]

This is all true, but what is at stake here is the extent to which some second agency is involved in a person's life, and whether such activity is compatible with freedom and personal identity. All the activities that Helm has highlighted above look *prima facie* benevolent, but there are times when their benevolence may fall into question. Ought one to cure someone when they do not want to be cured? This may be acceptable in the case of a child, but not so in the case of an adult. This raises the question of the status of the human person in a state of sin, to which we shall return in Chapter 5. The nub of the issue concerns the extent and nature of the intervention into another person's life. In Barth's account of subjective revelation, more than people's wishes are overridden, for God appears to change our very motivational and noetic structures, without our invitation or acceptance. The activities mentioned by Helm above, would in their human form involve some level of consent or acceptance. A person cries out for rescue. Rescuing the suicide attempt is not to tackle the intention to commit suicide. The addict accepts rehabilitation, without which the intention to pursue his addiction will probably survive.

The key conceptual tool in an account of *metamorphosis* which is inspired by Brummer, is that of *reciprocal identification*, of which similar concepts can be found in the works of psychologists and in trinitarian theology.[357] Thus, psychologist Barry Schlenker writes:

> Relationships develop when people's identities are or become interconnected..... Based on the identities that have evolved in the relationship, the parties can anticipate how each will interpret situations, the evaluations and outcomes preferred by the other, and the actions the other will proffer. The closer the relationship, the greater the extent to which the evaluation of experiences and outcomes shifts from individual to joint criteria, the interests and needs of the other weigh more heavily as the actor can experience vicarious rewards and costs, and the behavioral plans that exist for a wide variety of situations are based on co-ordinated team performances, not solitary, individual acts. In especially close relationships, the other becomes an extension of one's own identity, as people come to

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[355] Lucas, *Freedom and Grace*, pp.60-1.
[356] Paul Helm, "On Grace and Causation," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 32 (1979), p.111.
[357] Jürgen Moltmann refers to the 'persons' of the Trinity 'in a reciprocal relationships'. J. Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom of God*, trans. by Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1981), p.172.

> define themselves partially in terms of their roles in the relationship and their associations with the other.[358]

Let us be clear that when Schlenker talks of an "extension of one's own identity" the identity in question here is not *numerical* identity, but *qualitative* identity, that is psychological identity, the identity of one's personality. One negative analogy of the Personalist model, which arises immediately from Schlenker's account, is that in human interpersonal relationships accommodation has to take place, what Schlenker calls "identity bargaining" between the parties.[359] In the Divine-human relationship there is an undeniable asymmetry, the *condescending* of the transcendent God, who abides in "the high and holy place"(Isa.57.15) to establish a relationship with His creatures. Divine *accommodation* is not that of "identity bargaining," but choosing a mode of revelation which is accessible to His creatures.[360] Joint activities such as "trading concessions" or "negotiations" are wholly inappropriate to be predicated of the Divine-human relationship, and would undermine the sovereignty of Divine grace. The real process of change takes place on the side of the creatures, whom are called to participate in the Divine identity. Change comes about through identification with the Divine, so that the believer becomes an "image of God," a "son" or "daughter of God."

In the theology of Charles Williams, there is a concept which is close to Brummer's 'reciprocal identification', which Williams calls "the way of exchange", a "pattern" or "principle" which is to be found across life, especially in its partial realisation of the Kingdom of God. Thus, he writes: "From childbirth to the divine Trinity itself the single nature thrives; there is here no difference between that natural and that supernatural."[361] It is a pattern of the "co-inherence" of all things, or what Williams calls a "web of universal power towards substitution," to be found archetypally in the Christian doctrines of trinitarian *perichoresis*, the Atonement, the Eucharist, but also in natural realities such as pregnancy, human society, friendship and romantic love.

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[358] B. Schlenker, "Identities, Identifications and Relationships", in *Communication, Intimacy and Close Relationships*, ed. Valerian J. Derlega (Academic Press, Inc., Orlando/New York, 1984), pp.73-4.
[359] ibid., p. 92.
[360] Hendry, pp.96-117.
[361] C. Williams, "The Way of Exchange", in *Charles Williams: The Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology*, ed. by C. Hefling (Cowley Publications, Cambridge, 1993), pp. 204-215. Martin Buber talks of reciprocity in similar way, as: "Inscrutably involved, we live in the currents of universal reciprocity" *I and Thou*, pp.66 cf. pp.58, 84.

> At the root of the physical nature of man lie exchange of liking, substitution, inherence. The nature of man which is so expressed in the physical world is expressed after the same manner, only more fully, in the mental and spiritual.[362]

The Personalist model being considered envisages such co-inherence, substitution and exchange precisely as the means of *qualitative* transformation.

Although, William's concept of "exchange" has resonance within several theological *loci*, it has particular affinity to the Patristic concept of *perichoresis*, which has an equally wide range of theological reference, ranging from the unity and distinction in the Trinity, the Incarnation and the new creation. G.L. Prestige shows that the concept of *perichoresis* was linked by the Church Fathers to the word χωρειν (contain) which was used to designate Divine omnipresence, as containing the whole of creation.[363] In Gregory of Nyssa we see that:

> ....the Father and the Son are receptive and permeative (χωρητικοσ)of one another, and, as thus 'containing' one another, would be equal in extension; the one is enveloped in the other (περιεχεσθαι), but not in like manner with human instances of envelopment, in which the enveloping substance has an empty space in which to hold the substance enveloped; with God the relation is mutual. Here follows the simile of the sciences jointly and commonly pervading a single mind...[364]

This a conception of mutual extension in and containing by each other. Other words which Prestige has analysed as integral to the formation of the concept of *perichoresis* are "encircle" or "encompass"(περιχωρεω), "reciprocate," "interchange." In pseudo-Cyril the term is re-employed from a Christological to a trinitarian setting.[365] The three co-inherent *hypostaseis* are united by 'self-giving' love, not in a manner which confounds their particularity, viz. co-inherence without mixture or absorption.[366] The concepts of

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[362] Williams, "The Way of Exchange", p.209.

[363] G.L. Prestige, *God in Patristic Thought*, 2nd ed.(London: SPCK1956). Prestige holds that *perichoresis* only develops the sense of "interpenetration" by the time of Pseudo-Cyril, other research claims that this meaning was in place from the adoption of the term by Patristic Fathers. On this difference see Verna Harrison, "Perichoresis in the Greek Fathers," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol.35 (1991), pp.53-65.

[364] Prestige, p.290.

[365] "It is no longer perichoresis 'to' one another [as in Christology to explain the reciprocity and unity of action of the two natures], but perichoresis 'in' one another [trinitarian use].... Perichoresis 'to' one another might imply that the Persons were equivalent or alternative; perichoresis 'in' one another implies that they are coterminous and co-extensive." ibid., p.298.

[366] Harrison writes: "This relationship among the persons is an eternal rest in each other but also an eternal movement of love." Harrison, p.64.

"reciprocal identification" and "exchange" which we have found to have such import in interpersonal human relations, are analogous to the concept of *perichoresis* used in the doctrine of God.

The negative analogy between the two is that in the case of the Trinity, the three *hypostaseis* comprise one, numerical identity of being. As was pointed out in Chapter 2, in relation to the charge of monism directed towards mystical union, God and the human person are united at the level of will and love, not of essence or being. The Divine-human *perichoresis* is more like the reciprocal identification that takes place in human relationships, an identification that occurs at the level of *qualitative* or psychological (subjective) identity, rather than the unity of being in the Trinity.[367] There is plenty of scope for the trinitarian analogy to be complemented by others, as Williams does, especially as the term *perichoresis* is used by the Church Fathers in more than one domain.[368]

The concept of reciprocal identification could be said to have an interesting precursor in Aquinas' employment of the activities of loving and knowing as analogies of the Trinity. When someone loves what she knows, argues Aquinas, her will receives a "kind of imprint" of "the reality loved" and "the object loved is present in the lover even as the object known is present in the knower."[369] As Bernard Lonergan explicates Aquinas, to love is for the presence of the beloved to be in the lover: "the presence of the beloved in the lover is exactly the same entity as the act of love in the lover."[370] The concepts of exchange and indwelling resonate here. The affect of the beloved on the lover, almost as

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[367] Michael Lawler has argued that marriage be conceived in terms of *perichoresis*, which is indeed appropriate. However, he extends the analogy too far by holding that a couple become "one marital person," when trinitarian doctrine maintains the distinctness of the three *hypostaseis*. M. Lawler, "*Perichoresis*: New Theological Wine in an Old Theological Wineskin," *Horizons*, Vol.22, 1995, p. 49 - 66.

[368] Thus, Harrison writes of Maximus' use of *perichoresis* in ways which echo Charles William's conception of the "exchange" of the "great web of being": "He [Maximus] sees it[*perichoresis*] first of all as a kind of interconnectedness and commingling among created things themselves. Added to this is the mutual indwelling of God and the saints, who, in an ever-active repose that is both static and dynamic, become identical to him in energy as far as possible. By extension, life in the Kingdom can perhaps be envisaged as a mutual interchange of energies, *i.e.*, of the free and conscious personal life and self-manifestation of all who participate in it. There is, in other words, a radical giving of one's own being to God and to all other persons, as far as is possible, and a receiving of theirs in return." Harrison, p.65.

[369] *Summa Theologiae*, Ia. q.36, a.3. Aquinas also sees the same principle applicable to self-love. It is an application of the Scholastic principle, *intellectus in actu fit intellectum in actu*.

[370] B. Lonergan, *Verbum. Word and Idea in Aquinas*. ed. by David. B. Burrell, C.S.C. (London, Darton, Longman & Todd, 1968), p. 203.

indwelling him, motivates the lover to love. This sets up an interesting connection with the asymmetry of the Divine initiative of love for human creatures: in order for the creature to love God, they must first be loved by God, to have His very presence within them.

Our discussion of love and the Trinity in Chapter 1, also suggests a point of critique of Brummer's thesis. Reciprocal identification is indeed the mutual love (*amor mutuus*) about which Augustine and Richard of St. Victor talk, in the relation to the love of the Father and the Son. Yet, what of the self-transcending charity of ecstatic love? What of the "shared love" for the third (*condilectus*) in Brummer's conception? What prevents Brummer's reciprocal identification from becoming a selfish, insular love? Is this another lacunae due to Brummer's "incomplete" trinitarian theology? To respond to the Spirit in love is to love one who loves others, namely, Christ, and who in turn loves another, the Father. The Spirit is the mediator of this movement of ecstatic love first from the Father and the Son to the creature, and then in return from the creature to the Divine. In doing so, the Spirit aids us to love with God's ecstatic, overflowing love, which finds love in our fellow creatures and through them to love God. Reciprocal identification can never be a love caught in a dual exchange, for God's love is an ecstatic love that is a love beyond the dyad of a comfortable correspondence. Ultimately, if our Personalist model is to be shaped by "trinitarian controls," and others intrinsic to a range of Christian doctrine (such as the Incarnation and the Eucharist), then we will want to combine a concept of reciprocal identification or exchange with that of ecstatic love.

It is through this conception of reciprocal identification and exchange of subjective identities, that we can best resolve both the paradox of love, which Solomon has drawn our attention to, and the apparent contradiction embodied in our *generating question*. In **LPR** the boundaries of one's *qualitative* identity are expanded. Through reciprocal identification each party embraces, by degree, the (*subjective*) identity of the other party, adopting it as their own. This is not achieved by "take over" or fiat. Rather one adopts the other's identity, not by quashing one's own. One remains a subject, with a numerical and subjective identity. Yet through loving the other, empathising with the other, granting the other intrinsic value, the boundaries of one's self-identity open to include the other. Insofar as **LPR** with others is of supreme importance and fulfilment to the lovers, it is correct to say that one finds oneself in that love. One achieves reflective distance upon oneself

through encounter with another, "our 'seeing' happens in the presence of the other."[371] Through connection with others, one receives the resources to change,[372] to overcome inertia, addiction, habit and familiarity.[373] One may be *animated* by the challenge of the encounter with the other person and the flow of intercommunication.

Secondly, one realises a state of being which was not previously existent (new life), which offers fulfilment and meaning to one's life. It is not simply the case that one assumes another's subjective identity, but that in reciprocal identification, in the *ectasis* that this requires, one releases possibilities within oneself which were previously latent, and realise a new identity, an enlarged identity, as a 'being in communion.'[374] Ultimately, being in communion with God would be the state of greatest realisation, and deepest relationship. In such a relationship, to lose oneself would be to find one's true self. The trinitarian concepts of *perichoresis* and *koinonia* guide us to this conclusion. To be intimate is, then, to be in communion, and the opposite of that is disintegration and dislocation, which are concepts at the heart of the Christian understanding of sin.

As regards Solomon's paradox of love, we can say that the dialectic between love and individuality is not vicious. Indeed, the paradox was never of an ontological kind. The fusion envisioned is only one of will and identification not of being, and the "conflict" between love and individuality which Solomon talks of, is a psychological or social conflict, not an ontological one: the threat is never that of the absorption of one numerical identity by another, but the struggle of how two different personalities seek to share their lives together.[375] On the Divine Fiat view, the Spirit does threaten to change the nature of

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[371] Malone and Malone, p.19.

[372] "The energy and spirit to be different are provided by the *self-intimate* experience...The capacity to be different enables us to be creative...To be creative is to be different, and to be different is to be a more sensitive *me*, a more aware *I*, and more my *self*." ibid., pp.62-3.

[373] ibid., pp.61-63. The Malones talk about intimacy under four categories: "*connectivity*" (defined as: "...the *self* experienced in intimacy connects us psychologically, interpersonally, and spiritually....The psychological connections appear to be both spatial and temporal, providing enormously important ties to our past and our future" ibid., p.54); "*animation*;" "reverence for life;" "acceptance"(see below).

[374] The implicit trinitarian analogy is intentional (cf. John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*). Robert Solomon also emphasises the importance of the enlargement and expansion of the self in love: "One learns and grows by caring, by expanding one's interests outward, by making others not the *object* but the *subject* of one's own interests, by making their interests one's own" Solomon, p. 256.

[375] That this is the conclusion to be drawn from Solomon's account may be inferred from the following passage: "Love and individuality are necessarily in conflict even while they mutually support one another.... love is always an open question (individuality never fully resigns itself to be merged, and there is nothing guaranteed about the merger that is never fully completed)." Solomon, pp.250-251.

the paradox into an ontological one, one of *numerical* identity, by displacing the human subject. If we conceive of the operation of the Spirit in Christian *metamorphosis* in a Personalist mode, then the ontological paradox may be dissolved. The task of Christian sanctification takes on the semblance of the struggle of long term romantic relationships, to be attentive to the other and to seek a shared identity.

Applying the **LPR** model to Divine-human relations, it is he Spirit who brings about the *metamorphosis* of the human through personal presence. God provides the conditions of entry into this salvific relationship, by His initiative of Self-revelation in the person of Jesus Christ and the Atonement, and subsequently through challenging and calling us by thepresence of the Spirit. This model of personal presence, challenge, and transformation through exchange, requires some degree of human acceptance, response and consent. Brummer's comment, "God cannot bring about our choice without it ceasing to be ours,"[376] needs to be counterbalanced by the doctrines of Divine concurrence and providence.[377] God's action is primary in establishing the conditions of the choice, for after all God is the initiator as Creator and Revealer. Nonetheless, Bernard of Clarivaux aptly strikes the balance between the Divine initiative and human freedom when he writes:

> Take away free choice and there is nothing to be saved. Take away grace and there is no means of saving. Without the two combined, this work cannot be done.... None but God can give it, nothing but free choice can receive it. What, therefore, is given by God alone and to free choice alone, can no more happen without the recipient's consent than without the bestower's grace.[378]

Through God's gracious will there is an interdependence of grace and human freedom. If the Divine presence is accepted by the human person, *metamorphosis* proceeds through the dynamic movement of reciprocal identification and exchange, which is founded in ecstatic love.

According to Brummer's interpersonal model the choice of an agent is a *necessary* though not *sufficient* condition for an agent to act. Hence, one cannot say A caused act E, if a person other than A was the complete cause of that act. For Barth, God is the complete

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[376] *Speaking of a Personal God*, p.76.
[377] See Chapter 7.
[378] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Bernard of Clairvaux: on Grace and Free Choice*, trans. by D. O'Donovan, OSCO (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1988), 1.2.

cause of the person's coming to faith, and the act of acknowledgement. However, another person may be a *contributory* cause of act A, without being the complete cause. On this account, then, there could be room for some decision, on the part of man, to respond to the Spirit's call to bring about *metanoia* and accept the need for the Spirit's regenerative action in one's life. God would be the primary, initiating cause, whereas the human, in the act of acceptance and response, would be a subsidiary, ancillary cause. In relation to this question of the action of another person in someone else's life, Brummer argues:

> ...he or she can certainly create the conditions for the other to be able to realize his or her choice. One person can also offer motives or reasons for another to make specific choice. Reasons are not causes, and the other will always have to decide for him or herself whether the reasons given are a sufficient motive for the act in question.[379]

One may question whether Brummer's slightly discursive or rationalist conception of personal change is sufficient, but the general point is taken, that in cases of personal change a model of direct causation is not applicable. *Metamorphosis* results from the dynamic movement of reciprocal identification and exchange in ecstatic love between God and the human person brought about by the Divine initiative.

To come full circle, the metaphor of the *embrace*, employed by bridal mystics such as Bernard of Clairvaux, has recently been renewed by Miroslav Volf to describe the reconciling relationship of the Divine with the human.[380] "The drama of embrace," as Volf terms it, may be considered to be an emblematic metaphor for the Personalist model which has been advocated above. It involves a fourfold movement of opening, waiting, closing and re-opening, a movement which complements the dynamic of love in Augustine and Richard of St. Victor. The first opening of arms represents the Divine initiative in reaching out to the Other in ecstatic love; a gesture of invitation, but also the making of room for the Other.

> More than just a code for desire, open arms are a sign that I have *created space* in myself for the other to come in and that I have made a movement out of myself so as to enter the space created by the other.[381]

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[379] *Speaking of a Personal God*, p.74.

[380] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1996). When Volf comes to explicate the metaphor of embrace, he does so in terms of the relations of self and other. How readily this can be mapped onto the Divine-human relationship in the application of redemption he does not make clear. For my purposes, the arguments marshalled above in favour of a Personalist model, give me reason to appropriate it in such a way.

[381] ibid., p.141.

Then there is the stage of waiting, a holding in check which respects the integrity of the person and the need to elicit a response.

> The waiting self *can* move the other to make the movement towards the self, but its power to do so is the power of signalled desire, of created space, and opened boundary of the self, not the power that breaks the boundaries of the other..... Waiting is a sign that, although embrace may have a one-sidedness in its origin, it can never reach its goal.[382]

The closing is a movement together which requires the action of both parties, and is a symbol of reciprocity and communion. However, the embrace must avoid both crushing the other in an act of assimilation, or passively allowing oneself to be absorbed. The boundaries of both parties must be respected. This is why Volf also includes the possibility of re-opening the embrace to avoid the absorptionist model: "the self must take itself back into itself so that its own identity, enriched by the traces that the presence of the other has left, may be preserved."[383] This is so, Volf argues, because of the "underdetermination of the outcome."[384] If the person is to be granted relative autonomy, then she must be given the possibility of withdrawing or even rejecting the embrace. One may also add, following our discussion of Richard of St. Victor's conception of ecstatic love that one must also open the embrace to reach out still further, for love is love for the third as well.

III.) Developing the Personalist Model: The Concepts of Presence, Encounter and Acceptance.

III.01) *Presence.*

In this section of this chapter, three central concepts will be focused on which seek to explicate the Personalist model presented above, namely, 'presence,' 'encounter' and 'acceptance.' Let us begin with presence. The concept of presence is to be used to help explain how the Spirit can enable and re-orientate human action, in a manner which does not displace the human subject. The concept of presence is a biblical term found in both the Old and New Testaments. Hebrew Scripture refers to the presence of God in quite physical terms, which conveys the "full and living personality" of the God encountered.[385]

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[382] ibid., pp.142-3.
[383] ibid., pp.144-5.
[384] ibid., p. 147.
[385] L.H. Brockington, "Presence," in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, ed. by A. Richardson (London: SCM Press, 1957), p. 172. In the Hebrew Scriptures the presence of God is mediated through different means: the face, the sanctuary, the ark, the cloud, the *Shekinah* and His glory (*Kabod*).

Thus, famously Moses and Jacob are said to meet God "face to face."[386] J. A. Naude writes of God's *panim*: "The face of God denotes the very person of God, not just that side of him that is turned towards us."[387] Further, coming to the Temple for worship to attend the sanctuary, where God was ascribed to be present,[388] was described as "to come to see the face of God."[389] Seeing God's face rests first "on being seen by God,"[390] and God's choosing to make his presence known.

It is quite clear that the *effect* of God's presence is a means of initiating change.

> In Deut.4:37 Moses said that God led the people from Egypt through his face and his great power. His face is equated with his power as the means through which God did his mighty deeds.[391]

Light in Hebraic and Christian thought is not only an attribute of God,[392] but also a means of indicating God's presence.[393] The *effect* of such a presence is quite literally suggested in the case of Moses: after meeting God "the skin of his face was shining."[394] God's anger (*'ap*) is often predicated of the effects of God's face or nostrils.[395] The *effect* of God's presence is also intrinsically linked with the Hebraic concept of the *glory of Yahweh* (*Kabod*), which is extended by Ezekiel from its roots in the idea of the wealth, substance, diginity and honour of a man, to include the feature of God's brightness,[396] a theme which is taken up in the New Testament to describe of the Kingdom of God and the person of Jesus Christ.[397] Yahweh's *kabod* is something which can be seen (*r'h*),[398] and like His *panim* is said to accompany Israel during the exodus. *Kabod* is also associated with other

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[386] Exod.33.11 and Genesis 32.30. Other places which use the term "face" to designate the personal presence of God are: Deut.4.27; Isa.63.9. In both Greek (*prosopon*) and Hebrew (*panim*) the word for face also means 'presence.'

[387] "*r'h*" in *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* [*NIDOT*], Vol.III, ed. W. A. Van Gemeren, (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996), p.1010. See also, Mark S. Smith, "Seeing God in the Psalms" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, Vol. 50 (1988), pp. 171-183.

[388] Gen. 12.6, 7; 28.10ff; 32.24ff; I Kings 8.12f.

[389] Hence the priestly benedictions which petition God to "make his face shine upon thee" and to "lift up his countenance upon thee"(Num.6.25f.), and the desire of worshippers to 'seek' Yahweh's face (Ps.24.6; 27.8).

[390] Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord. A Theological Aesthetics. VI: Theology of the Old Covenant.* trans. B. McNeil, and E. Leiva-Merikas, ed. John Riches. (Edinburgh, T&T. Clark, 1991), p.68. See Job 28.24; Sir. 39.19f.

[391] H.F. van Rooy, "Panim," in *NIDOT*, Vol.III, p.639.

[392] Ps.104.2; Dan.2.22. See M.J. Selman, "*'Or*" in *NIDOT*, Vol.I, p. 325.

[393] Ps.89.15, cf. Ps.90.8.

[394] Thus, the shining face, in the Hebrew tradition, was considered to be a sign of joy and favour (e.g. Ps.31.16, cf. Pss. 27.9, 102.2; 104.29).

[395] Ps. 18.15: "at the blast of the breath of your nostrils."

[396] Ezekiel 1.28, cf. Exod.24.17.

[397] See for example, I Tim.6.16, Acts 22.6, 7; John 1.14, 17.1.

[398] Exodus 16.7, 10.

symbols of God's presence such as light, the cloud and the consuming fire.[399] Thus, C.J. Collins writes: "this is called the glory of the Lord because it reveals his person and dignity and the proper response to such a revelation is to give God honor and glory."[400] We have also touched upon the use of the Hebraic concept of *shekinah* to describe Yahweh's personal presence on earth and its influence on the New Testament concepts of *menein* and *oikein* in Chapter 1. Let us note that all these means of speaking of God's presence and its effect transcend the anthropomorphisms of their formulations. Thus, God's face can destroy upon sight,[401] it is therefore seen and not seen by Moses.[402] Perhaps, the best way Hebrew Scripture represents this dialectic is in the image of the Divine presence as a burning fire.

> The juxtaposition of bright burning fire and thick black darkness highlights the paradoxical nature of the divine presence. Yahweh is both present and hidden, accessible and mysterious, immanent and transcendent.[403]

Luther was one theologian who utilised the metaphor of the face in his central concept of the *coram* -relationship, being "before the face of...." There are many *coram*-relationships: *coram meipso*, being in my own sight, *coram hominibus*, being in the sight of people, and *coram mundo*, being sight of the world. However, for Luther all these relationships are only put in their proper context through the central relationship of *coram Deo*, whereby human creatures find the centre of their existence outside of themselves. As Gerhard Ebeling comments: "The most important element in the situation that is implied by the preposition *coram* is not the way in which someone else is present before me, in my sight, but the way that I myself am before someone else and exist in the sight of someone else, so that my existential life is affected."[404] We are before God not only as creatures whose very existence is dependent on God's presence, but also as self-giving Word and as Judge, who presents humanity with the reality of its situation.[405]

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[399] Isaiah 4.5; 60.1-2.
[400] "*Kabod*" in *NIDOT*, Vol.II, pp.581-2.
[401] Exodus 33.18; 33.20.
[402] Exodus 33.23.
[403] Robin Wakely, "*b'r*" in *NIDOT*, Vol.I, p.686.
[404] Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther. An introduction to his thought.* trans. R.A. Wilson (London: Collins, Fontana Library, 1972), p.196.
[405] Ebeling writes: "[T]he face of a person, at least when it is looking towards me, does not give me room or time to observe or describe it. For I experience myself in it, as one observed, as one looked at, which results either in my looking away or in my being completely preoccupied in holding my own against the gaze directed towards me." ibid., pp.194-5.

Nor for that matter am I reliant on the concept of presence developed by Buber.[406] Rather, I refer to the concept of presence one might find in Social Psychology, the presence of two or more people to each other. Thus, my methodology in this section will be more phenomenological in approach, an attempt at a description of presence in interpersonal human relations and its application to our subject matter.[407] The presence of another person, body and mind, affects us. For example, we walk into the room and a person is there who is in a bad mood and is "secretly" antagonistic towards us, but says very little (certainly not expressing his antagonism in any explicit linguistic form). Thus, we are confronted by a personal presence that affects us, and affects us in a particular way. We experience, as people often say, "a bad feeling", "a bad atmosphere", "bad vibes", to wit that something is wrong, or, more specifically, that we are not welcomed by this person. This is communicated not so much through language, as by non-verbal communication. For example, there is no eye contact, there is nothing other than a cursory gestured welcome, etc. Likewise, a person's presence, sometimes just the sheer presence of a person, can affect us in quite positive and constructive ways. Thus, people report simply feeling good in a particular person's presence; they do not need to engage in verbal communication. People experience being enabled and empowered by the presence of

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[406] As we have already pointed out, Buber's position is tainted by his radical distinction between the realm of "I-Thou" and "I-It," present in the distinction between personal presence and "content" (*I and Thou*, pp. 158-159). S.T. Katz comments on this: "it is not enough to assert that revelation understood as 'Presence' means 'event' and not content and thus that all logic and criteria is out of place, for an 'event' is also something that has to be made sense of and it too clearly is grounded in the necessary conditions of our experiential life. Likewise, any valid account of what it is to be a person will involve bodily criteria and objectivity." Katz, "Martin Buber's Epistemology," p.152. Similar comments could be addressed to Levinas' work.

[407] Gabriel Marcel is one Existentialist/Phenomenologist for whom the concept of presence plays an important role. G. Marcel, *Presence et Immortalite* (Paris: Flammarion, 1959). Presence can only be spoken of, according to Marcel, when there is communion between persons, a bond between persons, a sharing and enjoyment of presence, a *being-with* each other (*Mitsein*). For Marcel presence is precisely not to be located in the physical world of objects, because objects do not have the power of *ectasis*, they cannot reach out to us, and be with us. Whereas presence is engaging and brings about communion and the growth of personhood: "A presence refuses to allow us to posit it in a definite region of space, as if it were a 'solid, flawless mass' (a Parmenidean sphere). The space of presence is more like musical space than geometric space: it fills the room, overflows the person, plays between persons or lingers around our persons. Presence goes out from one person to another and will be the possession of no one.....We know whether someone is present or not, because when the other is present, he renews us in some way and makes us more fully ourselves than we should have been alone. It is not so much what the other says, but that he puts *himself* into his words and sustains his words by all he is." Joe McCown, *Availability: Gabriel Marcel and the Phenomenology of Human Openness* (Missoula: Scholars Press, AAR, 1978), p.41. The metaphor of music has quite evocative connotations for our attempt to describe the activity of the Spirit, who is also said to "fill" and "overflow". However, problems arise with Marcel's account in his radical epistemological dichotomy between "mystery" and "knowledge," which mirrors my difficulties with Buber's dichotomy between the "Thou" and the "It." As regards Marcel's explication of the concept of presence in relation to communion with the dead, I would draw a distinction between metaphorical presence and *actual* presence, and wish something said about the mediation of presence.

others: enabled to endure suffering after the touch or re-assurance of another; willing to undertake the risk of love.

Although I am not concerned with what contemporary Continental Philosophy terms the "metaphysics of presence," one modern continental philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, interestingly uses the metaphor of the "face" (*Le Visage*), in a way which echoes both the biblical use and Luther's *coram*-relationship. The face draws the attention of the viewer, it is that part of the body which confronts the onlooker most readily with the other person's personality, and it is the most expressive part of the body. In the same way, "the Other", whether it be another person or God, arrests our attention, examines us, and expresses itself towards us, revealing itself to us. It disrupts the order of the self and challenges its complacency.

For Levinas the face is a metaphor for encounter, not a possible object of representation. Levinas chooses to use the term "expression" to signify that the meaning which comes from the epiphany of the face, is "exterior," originating from beyond the self's meaning-construction. Levinas' concept of "expression" comes from the Greek καθ αυτο, suggesting the immediacy and directness of the encounter with the Other, in the same way that Plato's philosopher immediately attends the beautiful.[408] The encounter with the face of the Other takes place before representation, at the affective level, of what Beavers calls "felt meaning."[409] It is the exposure to the stare of the face of the other, that affects the self as the "passivity of vulnerability", awakening one to the reality of an Other independent of one.[410] In the process of calling the self into question, the face demands a response.[411] This

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[408] Merold Westphal elaborates the allusion to Plato: "In Plato and Aristotle kaq auto (*per se*, through or by means of itself) often designates the ontological immediacy of forms or substances that are self-sufficient with regard to their existence. But it can refer to an epistemic immediacy, as in *Republic* 476b. Here knowledge and opinion are being distinguished in terms of the difference between the philosophic few who can apprehend Beauty itself, and the lovers of sights and sounds who never get beyond 'beautiful sounds and colours and shapes.' The former must be able not only to apprehend Beauty itself (auto to kalon), as distinct from beautiful things; they must also apprehend it directly, through itself (kaq auto) and not through the mediation of those things. It is clearly this epistemic sense to which Levinas appeals." M. Westphal, "Levinas and the Immediacy of the Face," in *Faith and Philosophy*, Vol. 10, no.3 (1993), p.495. Note, however, that Levinas would be distinctly unhappy that kaq auto is an "apprehension" of the theoretical mind.

[409] Anthony F Beavers, *Levinas beyond the Horizons of Cartesianism* (New York: Peter Lang, 1995), p. 89.

[410] John Burke comments: "The passivity of astonishment is to be understood in the etymological sense of surprise, 'super-prendere', to be taken over or taken up, with no hope of return through the power of thought. The face of the Other has invaded my solitude, disturbed the egoism of happiness and lifted me toward what

is not because of some contract drawn up, or a commitment given. The obligation stems from the encounter with the Other. Its ability to disturb, contest, refuse to be subsumed, to call into question, and its very alterity, demand a response. The meaning of the alterity of the Other is not to be "re-presented" as a phenomenon in the mind, but to be found in the relational matrix of encounter and response.[412]

How do the issues of human freedom and personal identity, which are of concern to us, relate to personal presence as explicated above? Can one choose to be exposed to and affected by the personal presence of another? One may have the choice as to whether or not to stay in this person's presence and hence, continue to be affected by this person's presence. However, as a presence which confronts one as part of the 'givenness' of the world, one can seldom choose *a priori* not to be exposed to and affected by the presence of this person. One simply encounters people as the result of the course of my life. In a like manner, one cannot choose to be exposed to and affected by the world, only to cease to be affected by it altogether in suicide. This does not contravene a person's freedom from constraint. One is affected by the presence of the other, but not determined by them, as in the "bogeyman" who causally determines my mental states. Although a person's presence may become constraining in a strong and negative sense, this is usually the result of an extensive relationship with a person of a manipulative kind, and hence, transgresses the criteria of freedom within personal relationships, outlined above. A person's presence may be powerfully seductive, but such a presence only becomes controlling if the intent of the person in her subsequent action is intentionally manipulative and requires the perceiver to have such a disposition that she cannot stand back from the source of attraction. Thus, in most cases personal presence can affect, but it cannot determine; it leaves room for response and for the space required to maintain one's personal identity.

Let us apply such thinking analogically to the Spirit-human relationship in Christian *metamorphosis*. The claim is that it is the effect of the Spirit's personal presence that

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is radically not me." J. P. Burke, "The Ethical Significance of the Face", *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association,* Vol.56 (1982), p.198.

[411] *Totality and Infinity*, p.203.

[412] As Levinas puts it, "His exteriority [the Other's], that is, his appeal to me, is his truth." ibid., p.291. A. Beavers comments: "The truth of the other person is produced in my response... This is to say that the meaning of otherness is 'understood' by me in my obligation and response, not in any conceptual knowledge.

initiates change in the person. St. Augustine in his commentary on John's Gospel talks of conversion in terms of the attraction (*trahere* and *attrahere*) of the heart by God. By conceiving of conversion in terms of Divine attraction of the human, by 'gentleness and sweetness,' Augustine emphasises its personal and non-coercive quality.

> Do not think that you are drawn to God against your will, because your soul is also drawn by His love. The heart delights in the sweet bread from heaven....It is not necessity nor obligation, but pleasure, that draws the heart to God.[413]

Augustine actually uses analogies based on the attraction of physical objects and sensory perception to elucidate the attraction of God, revealed in Jesus Christ.[414] He talks of the Spirit as the one who "gives us motivation, a delight [*delectatio*] and a love [*dilectio*]."[415] Peter Brown refers to Augustine's "psychology of delight":

> 'Delight' is the only possible source of action, nothing else can move the will. Therefore, a man can act only if he can mobilize his feelings, only if he is 'affected' by the object of delight.[416]

Augustine also conceives of the heart as "the base of the traction and attraction of the Father, *cor uniculo trahitur*."[417] Interestingly M. Cleary believes that this theology of love and delight stems from Augustine's own experience of friendship, citing his description of the loss of a close friend in Book IV of the *Confessions*.[418] This suggests that Augustine is utilising a form of Personalist model or analogy: "Show me a person who loves and he will understand what I am saying."[419] This is not to maintain that other aspects of Augustine's conception of grace and Christian anthropology do not undermine a Personalist model.[420]

Furthermore, this meaning is not found in the content of my response, but in the very act of responding." Beavers, p.99.

[413] *In Ioannis evangelium tractus*, 26, 4, quoted in, Jose Oroz Reta, "The Role of Divine Attraction in Conversion According to Augustine," in, *From Augustine to Eriugena: Essays on Neoplatonism and Christianity in Honor of John O'Meara*, eds. F.X. Martin, O.S.A, & J.A. Richard ( ) p.158.

[414] *In Ioannis evangelium tractus*, 99, 4.

[415] *The Spirit and the Letter*, 56, XXXIII.

[416] P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*. A Biography (London: Faber, 1967), pp. 154-155.

[417] Reta, p.164.

[418] M. Cleary, "Augustine, Affectivity and Transforming Grace," *Theology*, Vol.93 (1990), p.209-210.

[419] *Io.euang. tract.*, 26, 4.

[420] For example, Augustine's emphasis in his later theology on the extent of sin, the polarisation of grace and nature, and what Rudolf Lorenz has termed his "insistence on the 'innerness' of grace." Rudolf Lorenz "Gnade und Erkenntnis bei Augustinus," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 75 Band (1964), p.76. Cleary and Reta do not make it clear that Augustine held that "by a secret, wonderful, and ineffable power operating within, that God works in human hearts not only revelations of the truth, but also good dispositions of the will." *De. grat. Chr. et de pecc. orig.* I, xxv, 24. This raises the question of whether human consent is involved in this interior work. Certainly human beings are free and morally culpable, because they "fail to seek the knowledge that they do not have." *De Libero Arbitrio*, III.19.53. Free will also appears to play a part in the request for Divine aid ("...this is why we ask for help, when we say, 'Do not bring us into temptation,'

Nonetheless, our focus is not on Augustine, but on the development of a Personalist model. To that end, it may be noted that Cleary concludes: "true freedom of action is to be found in being supremely attracted to someone in such a way that love becomes so gradually unimpeded that nothing will hold us back; no alternatives, no matter how superficially attractive, can take the place of delighting in the presence of someone to whom we are naturally drawn, for we were created for him."[421]

The reality of the Spirit's presence, like the reality of the persons whom we encounter in our life in the world, is not something that we choose, only something we can ignore and reject. Just as the fact of this "given -ness" of presence, in the case of human presence, does not by itself determine us, likewise the presence of the Divine, by Himself, does not determine us, or infringe our identity. The presence affects us, challenging, questioning and disrupting our cosy egocentrism. How we respond to being affected, is a matter for us. We can either utilise the constructive affect of God's Spirit, which is an enabling love, to further open ourselves up to God's presence, or limit and abjure that presence.

III.02) *Encounter.*

Presence brings forth the possibility of *encounter* and much has already been said on that above. Other facets of the concept of encounter need to be noted. To be with another requires one to encounter the other, to draw up alongside the other,[422] but coterminous with such a movement is also the need to withstand absorption by the other. F.J. Smith shows how this dialectic is evident in the etymology of the concept of encounter:

> ...the Anglo-Saxon *wid* means both for and against. This becomes evident in the verb, withstand, which is different than to stand with but complements it, existentially speaking. In encounter we come to stand and therefore can stand with the other; but in order to preserve our own stand we must withstand the otherness of the other, which may never be allowed

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and we would not plead for help if we believed that there was no way to resist it." *De natura et gratia*, LXVII.80. Yet, overall it appears as if Augustine is caught between the position that the will of faith is controlled by God, His gift, yet ultimately in the hands of human free will. Further, to say as Augustine does that God knows the circumstances under which we would freely will, begs the question why God does not arrange such circumstances for everyone. Augustine does not solve this dilemma argues Eleonore Stump, "Augustine on Free Will," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, eds. by E. Stump and N. Kretzman (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), pp.124-147.

[421] Cleary, p. 209.

[422] Martin Buber writes: "The You confronts me. But I enter into a direct relationship to it. Thus the relationship is at once being chosen and choosing, passive and active. For an action of the whole being does away with all partial actions and thus also with all sensations of action - and hence it comes to resemble passivity." *I and Thou*, pp. 124-125.

> to predominate or absorb us. Not to withstand, while standing with means to lose one's personal stance and thus be incapable of encounter.[423]

We should note the resemblance of this conception of encounter as some form of being-with to the Johannine understanding of the Spirit as *parakletos*, the "one who is called alongside."[424]

Prior to personal encounter, we are already shaped by the shared world and shared human community within which we participate, our intersubjective environment.[425] We have already noted, what the Malones term, the relation of intimacy and "connectivity,"[426] and as Solomon comments, our connection with other people and the environment around us supplies the right context for thinking about the paradox of love:

> Our selves are underdetermined by the facts about us - our appearance, our physical and mental abilities, our past history of accomplishments - and they are mutually rather than individually defined, defined with and through others. So conceived, the idea of sharing selves is not so implausible.[427]

F.J. Smith adds that the experience of alterity within the self and human capacity for self-reflection is also fundamental to encounter:

> The individual is both the one and the other, and can be so because even in itself it can be an other to self. The one can look on itself as the other, and that in many ways. And perhaps for this reason it is capable of admitting the other into itself.[428]

What is this "otherness" in the self which allows for interpersonal identification? On the one hand, it may refer to what Charles Williams calls, the "great web" of the co-inherence of things that precedes the individual subject, hence to the prior sharing which is the intersubjective precondition of all relationships. What is it for the self to experience otherness in itself? Smith might also be referring to the elusiveness of the self, as a complex phenomena, which assumes multi-faceted roles, hence the open-ended nature of self-knowledge.[429]

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[423] F.J. Smith, "The Phenomenology of Encounter", *Philosophy Today*, Vol.7 (1963), p.206.
[424] See Chapter 1, sc. I.0102.
[425] We shall return to this subject in Chapter 7.
[426] See ft. 352 above.
[427] R.C. Solomon, *About Love*, p.197.
[428] Ibid., p.200.
[429] The Malones write: "All humans have spaces. We exist in several different ways with ourselves, and we can think of each of these ways as a 'space'....Being able to have space and go there is most important to our staying healthy and sane." Malone, p.21. Freud's concept of the unconscious is a candidate for alterity within the self. Could a comparison be made here with the three *hypostaseis* of the One God? Is there "otherness" in

The point of the matter is that this prior sharing is part of the bridge of successful encounter. First, there is the fact of another's presence, in the case of the Spirit this represents a Divine initiative and invitation. This intiative of presence affects without violating the "boundaries of the other;" it offers a challenge, a call, an enabling power. Then there is the form of mediation which allows the encounter and communication to take place: the intersubjective space, the natural world and so on. The test of a successful encounter with the Divine is whether a person can open themselves up and respond to the initiative.

III.03) *Acceptance.*

> The mind, is not forced to believe in the existence of anything. That is why the only organ of contact with existence is acceptance, love.[430]

The concept of acceptance which will be outlined here is an attribute of God's personal presence. It is an *accepting* presence, not an acceptance which eliminates judgement or disagreement, but an acceptance which gives loving intent precedence. This follows from the Johannine conception of the Divine purpose (John 3:17), that the Incarnation is not a condemnation of the world, but its means of salvation. The Incarnation is an acceptance by the Divine of human form and atonement for human sin. Such accepting love is testified to in an exemplary way in the parable of the prodigal son. As Paul tells us in Galatians 4, it is because of the Son's "Abba-relationship" with the Father, that we may be His adopted sons. This is the relationship in which the Father says to the Son at the baptism, and hence to his adopted children, the words of acceptance: "You are my Son, the beloved; with whom I am well pleased."[431] Acceptance enables *metamorphosis*:[432]

> An alien, a person who does not feel accepted for who he or she is, cannot change, for he or she cannot exist in the real world, the world in which change is possible.... Unless I am loved and cared for as I really am, however, much my being that way distresses you, then I cannot change.[433]

God? The 'negative analogy' would be that the *hypostaseis* have a degree of distinctness which our 'roles' do not have. Thus, the Father as distinct from the Son and enters into dialogue with Him. The Son and Spirit are sent by the Father. At the same time, the *perichoresis* within the Trinity is complete.

[430] Simone Weil, *Gravity and Grace* (London: ARK Paperbacks, [1947] 1987), p.57.

[431] Mark 1.11 cf. Mtt. 3.17 which uses the less personl form: "This is my Son..."

[432] "The power of true acceptance is like a miracle. It can make things that have been stuck for years change in a moment." Malone, p.71.

[433] Ibid., p.70.

This implies a mode of change which is *personal*, in the sense we have defined above. The change is initiated from outside the self, yet it is precisely not a transformation predicated on imposition or absorption. Rather it is a creation by the presence which encounters the other person, of a "space of empathy,"[434] a loving acceptance, which bestows self-worth, allows for self-perception and reflection without despair or self-destruction. This is also a key feature of a Personalist Model, as this "empathic matrix," as Ralph Ellis terms it, is a condition of successful romantic love:

> There is a need for someone in relation to whom we can express the felt sense of our present state of consciousness in such a way that they can be intensified, focused, explicated, and therefore can unfold into the future directions of consciousness in such a way that they are brought into focus.[435]

Empathy for Ellis creates the possibility of change, of an unfolding of consciousness through identification with the other person, and living the shared life together. It is a *metamorphosis* in which the subject can truly participate, and make her own. Such an experience is at the heart of intimacy, because it is an acceptance of one's real *intima*, one's 'innermost' self.[436]

God's attitude of acceptance towards us, prefigures the nature of His creatures' response to the Divine initiative. "Who am I?" asks Dietrich Bonhoeffer in a poem in which he wrestles with the tension between, on the one hand, the public perceptions of his fellow prisoners who witness his humanity and fortitude in prison, and, on the other, his own interior perceptions of his state, which fail to match up. He ends with a resolution:

> Who am I? They mock me these lonely questions of mine.
> Whoever I am, thou knowest, O God, I am thine.

This is the point where Divine acceptance enables self-acceptance. Rowan Williams comments on the poem:

> The 'answer' is the simple self-commitment to God: the wholeness of Bonhoeffer's selfhood lies in its belonging to God, a wholeness achieved in trust and hope rather than analysis.... My own identity's 'ungraspable' quality thus becomes not an elusive level of interiority, but the unknowable presence of the creator's absolute affirmation, the mysteriousness of grace, past, present and future, not of the 'true self' as a hidden thing. My unity as

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[434] Ralph D. Ellis, *Eros in a Narcissitic Culture* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1996), p. 60.
[435] Ibid.
[436] Ibid., p.73. The connection between intimacy and self-worth is also made by Solomon, p.239.

> a person is always out of my field of vision (I can't see my own face), just as the divine condition for there being fields of vision at all, for there being a world or worlds, is out of my field of vision (I can't see my own origin).[437]

What does the human have to accept? In short, the reality of the Divine loving and accepting presence, the offer of relationship with the Divine, and the enabling of the Spirit which results from that relationship. It is out of God's acceptance of us that we accept Him, and we do so, concomitantly, by accepting ourselves as grounded and guided by Him. This is at the basis of real repentance, the *metanoia* at the birth of *metamorphosis*. Acceptance requires a growth in self-knowledge, which as Ilham Dilman has argued, is also connected with the possibility of change.[438] Self-knowledge he defines as knowing what one cares about, and being behind one's actions and in a "relation to what belongs to [one's] history," an acceptance of one's "talents, limitations, background, experiences, allegiances," having found "a way of living one can go along with, be oneself in."[439] The acquisition of self-knowledge requires change and movement: a resolution of inner conflicts, an accepting of past failures, a rejection of delusory goals and expectations. It is the combination of Divine acceptance and self-acceptance, as Bonhoeffer acknowledges, which provides the unity of self.[440] This is a recognition that the Divine acceptance of oneself is the ground and source of the possibility of true transformation. As Bonhoeffer writes:

> One must completely abandon any attempt to make something of oneself, whether it be a saint, or a converted sinner, or a churchman.... By this-worldliness I mean living unreservedly in life's duties, questions, successes and failures experiences, discoveries and perplexities. In abandoning ourselves like this we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taking seriously, not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world -

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[437] Rowan Williams, "The suspicion of suspicion: Wittgenstein and Bonhoeffer," in *The Grammar of the Heart*, ed. by R.H. Bell (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), p.43.

[438] I. Dilman, "Self-Knowledge and the Possibility of Change," in *Rules, Rituals and Responsibility: Essays dedicated to Herbert Fingarette*. ed. M.I. Bockover (Open Court: La Salle, Illimois, 1991), pp. 137-152

[439] Ibid., pp.139, 144. He goes on to write: "Self-knowledge, in the sense under discussion, involves authenticity, emotional learning and growth, and that includes the resolution of inner conflicts, the achievement of greater unity of self. It is through such learning, resolution, and growth that a person moves towards autonomy. To be in charge of one's life means to be in control of *oneself*, in the sense in which Socrates meant this, *not* to be in control of the different things that impinge on one's life: all the things that one cares for and all the things that make a difference, for good or ill, to the things one cares for. Much of this is beyond one's control and often a source of deep pain and distress to one. To come to know this is the beginning of wisdom, to learn to live with it is an important part of self-control." ibid., pp.149-150.

[440] One may note the similarities and differences between Bohoeffer/Williams position and Simone Weil, when she writes: "My 'I' is hidden for me (and for others); it is on the side of God, it is in God, it is God." Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.53.

> watching with Christ in Gethsemane. And that, I think, is faith; that is *metanoia*; so it is that one becomes a human being and a Christian.[441]

Simone Weil sees human acceptance as a reflection of God's renunciation (*kenosis*) and self-giving in creation. In the act of *creatio ex nihilo* God abdicates His claim to be everything. Hence, the human is called to respond to God in an event of "decreation":

> Renunciation. Imitation of God's renunciation in creation. In a sense God renounces being everything. We should renounce being something. That is our only good.[442]

By reversing the natural tendency of the ego, the grasping "I am," to expand, to consider itself an autonomous "I", one again makes room for the presence of God, to be "all in all."[443]

> It is necessary to uproot oneself. To cut down the tree and make of it a cross, and then to carry it every day.[444]

To uproot oneself is to detach oneself from one's desires, fantasies and self-propulsion, and to live with an attention, not attached to the objects of our imagination, but to the love of God. Acceptance means accepting the "void" of self-renunciation and detachment, which is not, according to Weil a form of nihilism, for, "Grace fills empty spaces,"[445] and hence one has the paradox that "this void is fuller than all fullness."[446] Even writers on romantic love talk of the need for a limited deconstruction of one's identity, which enables an openness to the other person, and which can lead to a heightened consciousness,

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[441] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Letter 21st July 1944," *Letters from Prison* (London: SCM Press/ Fontana, 1968), p.125.
[442] *Gravity and Grace*, p.29.
[443] What concerns me about the outcome of Weil's thinking is that it does appear to end up in some form of absorption mysticism, rather like the relationship between the Hindu *Brahma* which absorbs the *atman*. Thus, Weil writes: "The sin in me says 'I.'// I am all. But this particular 'I' is God. And it is not an 'I.'// Evil makes distinctions, it prevents God from being equivalent to all." ibid., p.27. J.P. Little comments: "Ultimately, then, in Simone Weil's vision of the decreated being, there is only God as a willing being, and matter which is entirely docile to law. The creature when decreated is merely the passage of the love of God for the Son which passes through creation. There is then no autonomous self set up in opposition to creation itself, the emphasis is on withdrawal, on not following natural inclinations, on not exercising power everywhere one is able to." J.P. Little, "Simone Weil's concept of decreation," in *Simone Weil's Philosophy of Culture. Readings Towards a Divine Humanity*. ed. by R.H. Bell (Cambridge: CUP, 1993), p.42. Such a position appears to be in tension with a Personalist Model which *per definitionem*, predicates a distinction between those in a relationship and while affirming reciprocal identification, wishes to maintain the particularity of both parties and the distinctiveness of their contributions and creativity.
[444] Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.34.
[445] ibid., p.10.
[446] ibid., p.13.

renewed personal creativity and a deeper self-knowledge.[447] Such a position need not be read as self-nihilation. As Miroslav Volf points out in his explication of Galatians 2.19-20, it is not a question of dissolving the self as a centre, but re-centring the self in a process of being de-centred from the power of sin, to be truly centred in Christ.

> Paul presumes a centered self, more precisely a wrongly centered self that needs to be de-centered by being nailed to the cross: ' I have been crucified with Christ.' Though the self may lack an 'objective' and 'immovable' center, *the self is never without a center*; it is always engaged in the production of its own center. ..... 'It is Christ who lives in me'....suggests that the de-centering was only the flip side of re-centering. The self is both 'de-centered' and 're-centered' by one and the same process, by participating in the death and resurrection of Christ through faith and baptism.[448]

Such a rooted, if de-centred self is able to open itself up in ecstasis and enter into relational exchange, "in [the] self-giving love made possible by and patterned on the suffering of the Messiah,"[449] and, one may add, the intra-trinitarian dynamic of love.

IV.) *Conclusion.*

The purpose of developing these three concepts has been to suggest an alternative conception to the Divine Fiat view, regarding the Spirit-human relation in Christian *metamorphosis*. It has built upon the Personalist model put forward by Vincent Brummer, and re-orientated it in a trinitarian direction. Personal presence is affective, as Augustine points out. Personal encounter can bring about personal change without the non-initiator having first chosen deliberately to seek out such a path. The person encounters the Divine, through no choice of her own, just as we encounter the presence of people on a daily basis through no choice of our own. Many of the people we encounter affect us very little, because we lack the time, or the disposability to be in their presence. Our exposure to God's presence is over a lifetime. Does this mean that God is the archetypal stalker, the unwanted presence? A stalker is, etymologically speaking, a hunter, someone who is threatening and intrusive. God is not intrusive or threatening, his presence is that of ecstatic love, consistent with His essential nature. Although, God is always present, He sometimes decides not to make His presence felt; He does not overpower or manipulate

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[447] Ellis, p. 129.
[448] Volf, pp. 69, 70. As we shall see in Chapter 7, Volf grounds such a perception in the dialectic of "separating out," differentiation, and "binding," interrelation, which is to be found in the Divine act of creation.
[449] ibid., p.71.

us. As the very ground of our being, God's presence is the ever present personal presence which affects but does not overwhelm us; which challenges but does not intrude; which gives us the space to have our own identity, but will always appeal to us to be more than an introverted identity, to find fullness of life with Him and with others.

From initiative of the Divine presence and encounter stems Christian *metamorphosis* in response and acceptance of the need for repentance. Once such a human response occurs in relative autonomy, without dissolving the boundary of the self, sanctification can flow through a process of exchange or reciprocal identification in ecstatic love from the Divine to the human. The Spirit is the mediator and aid, first carrying the ecstatic love of the Father and the Son to the human creature, and then enabling its return to the Son and the Father, often through love of neighbour, so binding the love of the Christian community. The image of the *embrace*, as first adopted by the bridal mystics, acts as a summarising metaphor of the Personalist model presented. To further examine the extent of the explanatory efficacy of the Personalist model advanced above and to strengthen it, we shall investigate the possible "negative analogies" of this model.

CHAPTER 4.

THE NEGATIVE ANALOGIES OF THE PERSONALIST MODEL.

In this chapter the explanatory power of the Personalist Model developed will be tested and qualified by considering the potential negative analogies.

I.) The First Negative Analogy: Divine-Human Asymmetry.

I.01) The Asymmetry between Creator and Creature.

The last Chapter found that the use of trinitarian theology fulfilled both a critical and constructive function in the development of a Personalist model, in contrast with Vincent Brummer's use of an "incomplete doctrine of the Trinity" in his model of love. Brummer's account may be further criticised for failing to give full weight to the ontological distinction between Creator and creature. His account of the Personalist model[450] presupposes an anthropomorphic symmetry and mutuality of relationship between the Divine and the human, whereas the reality of that relationship is asymmetrical. This may be traced back to Brummer's deficient ontology of God, and his belief that personal relations are fundamental to establishing identity, a point which when applied to God results in a position of God needing human love in order to be truly personal.[451] The reasons for holding such an asymmetry are clear: God is creator, human beings are His creatures; God's nature is "almighty," whereas human nature is finite and limited. Whereas God can freely choose to relate to humankind, sin presents an obstacle to human relations with God. Brummer's account does not deal directly with the question of sin.[452] For Barth, as we have seen, it is precisely the alienating effect of sin which makes him posit the

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[450] Note that Martin Buber also posits such equality and symmetry in the "I-Thou" relationship (*I and Thou*, p. 66).

[451] For a development of these criticisms see, Schwöbel, "God is Love," pp. 307-328.

[452] Paul Helm criticises John Lucas' "Freedom and Grace", from which Brummer draws heavily, arguing that, "Lucas puts people in a position of neutrality with respect to divine grace," whereas in fact they are indifferent and hostile until turned around by grace." "On Grace and Causation," p.112. However, Lucas writes: "The metaphor of personal relationships may mislead, because we naturally think of these as between two persons on an equality with each other, but with God, although it still is a two--way affair, it is also heavily one-sided. There are two parties, but the human party is not up to much, and it is God who makes most of the going." *Freedom and Grace*, p.48. Lucas is not denying that we are sinners, and that sin is a form of alienation from God. Neither is he claiming that we can reach God on our own. If we were truly neutral towards grace, grace would not be very potently gracious. God is still gracious for Lucas, because presumably it is God who reveals Himself in His Son, and who refuses to be put off by our indifference or hostility towards His Gospel, and continues to offer Himself in relationship to us through the Spirit. We are loved into acknowledging Him, not force-fed. This conception of the Divine-human relationship allows us to preserve our freedom, identity and integrity.

intervention of the Spirit in the life of the believer. We shall explicitly treat the issue of sin in Chapter 5.[453] The existence of sin means that God's initiating and enabling action is required if the Divine-human relationship is to be brought to fruition.

John Macquarrie presents the negative analogy of Divine-human asymmetry as follows:

> A second reason against the equation of revelation with an 'I-thou' encounter is that in the latter, as we have seen, reciprocity and give-and-take are essential. There is no mastering of one side by the other. In the revelatory experience, however, the person who receives the revelation is utterly transcended by the holy being that reveals itself; and this utter one-sidedness again implies that a personal encounter could only be a very remote analogue.[454]

However, Macquarrie just assumes that a Personalist model does not have the resources to accommodate Divine-human asymmetry. It will be argued, following certain philosophical insights from Emmanuel Levinas, that all interpersonal relationships are constituted by a degree of asymmetry. Brummer's his account is compatible with God being the initiating and primary cause of human salvation, with human beings taking only a secondary and contributory role. Further it can be modified employing the doctrine of creation and the Trinity to give asymmetry an ontological basis.

I.02.) Levinas, Interpersonal Relations and Alterity.

Emmanuel Levinas' philosophy of alterity seeks to show that the relationship of asymmetry is actually at the heart of interpersonal human relationships, and hence, may be considered less threatening to the Personalist model. It is hoped that Levinas' insights in this matter may be appropriated in terms of their observations regarding psychology. This is to more or less bracket off his metaphysics, or what may aptly be described as his "meta-phenomenology," which would unnecessarily intrude upon the substance of my thesis.[455]

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[453] There is a debate to be had here on (a.) the extent of sin, and (b.) how God deals with sin. On the latter point, the Personalist model proposed in the last Chapter conceives of re-orientation in terms of a combination of encounter and challenge, initiated by Divine presence, alongside attentive acceptance and repentance.

[454] J. Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1977), p.93.

[455] My reasons for doing so would begin with the point that Levinas' treatment of the philosophical tradition is less than adequate. As William Desmond says, "Levinas shows a tendency to identify the assumptions and analyses of Cartesian and transcendental idealism with essential possibilities of philosophy." W. Desmond, "Marcel, Jaspers, Levinas," in *Continental Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*: *Routledge History of Philsophy* VIII. ed. by R. Kearney (London:Routledge, 1994), p.160. Levinas tends to demonise the epistemological efforts of the rational mind, as being "totalising." If all our knowledge is neither revisitation (*anamnesis*), nor imbued with quite the constructive activity of the mind as some Post-Kantians might

Levinas is concerned with the tendency in Western philosophy and, one can say, a tendency of human relations in general, to reduce the "Other" (e.g. the alterity of another person) to the orderings or representations of the subject.[456] This act Levinas marks out by the use of the verb, "to totalize." Drawing on Husserlian phenomenology, Levinas argues that the representations of the conscious subject reduce the other to the conceptualisations of consciousness and in doing so strip away the character of otherness that one is seeking to understand.[457] One does not have to accept Levinas' overarching "meta-phenomenological" framework, to recognise that his thesis has a certain plausibility at the level of the psychology of human relationships, in terms of the dangers of ego-centricity and the oppression of other peoples' identities. Levinas' account of the radical exterior alterity of the Other may be considered too extreme, discarding as it appears to do the important role of shared language, culture and capacities which allow for the revelation of the Other to take place. However, the most important facet of Levinas' account to grasp is his emphasis on what is required for the Other to be able to relate without being subsumed by the self, "taken over" by fiat.

Levinas' explicates his thesis, that there is an asymmetry in human relationships, by using the metaphor of "height:" the Other "comes from on high". "Height"(hauteur) refers to the fact that for Levinas the Other comes from "beyond being"; the Other transcends the limits of the representations and ordering of consciousness. Levinas writes, "It is necessary that the other person be nearer to God than I." What Levinas means by this is that if the Other is to reveal herself and is not to be absorbed by the self, then the relationship must be

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suggest, why should our knowledge acquisition be so tainted, damned even, by the circularity of the 'Same'? The fallacious results of Levinas' dichotomy between theoretical consciousness, which is to be regarded with suspicion, and the affective realm of sensibility, sensitivity to which can lead to true encounter, can be seen in his designation of the Other as "teacher." As he has cast suspicion on the theoretical consciousness, we seem to be unable to *reflect* on our experience of the Other, which is necessary to learn something *from* the encounter. We are left with a non-cognitive, affective encounter, about which we can say next to nothing, and a refusal to explain how our reflective consciousness can be positively brought back into play.

[456] "The Other" can refer to the human other (*l'Autrui*) or to the natural world (*l'Autre*). In contrast to the "Other" is the concept of "The Same" (le Meme), which can refer to the Self, the transcendental ego of phenomenology, which is narcissistic, a commitment of the self to itself, construing all knowledge as reminiscence and subsuming all particularities under neutral generalities. The term, "the Same", can equally be seen, for Levinas, to be synonymous with what Levinas sees to be the ontology of the Western philosophical tradition with its monism and "totalizing" dominance: "The itinerary of philosophy remains that of Ulysses, whose adventure in the world was only a return to his native island - a complacency in the Same, an unrecognition of the Other." E. Levinas, "Meaning and Sense," in *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*. eds. by A. Peperzak, R. Bernasconi and S. Critchley (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1996), p.48. "The Other" is not the opposite of the Same, for that would be, according to Levinas, to set up an ontological order, which would be illegitimate.

unconditional:[458] neither dependent on what the Other does for me, nor conditioned by an expectation of the Other's obligation or responsibility towards me. The Other is not one of a kind or class, about which I can establish certain conventions or a set of responsibilities. The asymmetry is something, which can only be seen from the experience of encounter with the Other, not from a perspective outside it. The Other "from on high," beyond my ability to represent her, is always to a certain extent unknown and unpredictable.[459] The Other that 'faces' the self disrupts and questions the order of the self, and in so doing calls for a response. The Other has ethical import, and as such is required to be separate from the Same.

> Ethics maintains the space between self and other after separation, thereby allowing the self to emerge as a self in reference to the other without possessing the other. Thus, ethics is the possibility of social interaction.[460]

Yet, the Other also has ethical 'authority' in her very "nakedness" and "nudity,"[461] the terms Levinas uses for the Other's vulnerability in face of the potential exploitation by the self's domain. By possessing this asymmetry the Other can "command." There is asymmetry too in the Other's "role" as my teacher,[462] another designation given by Levinas. The teacher will teach something which is not a recollection (*anamnesis*), but something previously unknown, which I do not possess. It is in this asymmetry of the encounter with the Other that the true meaning of "the subject" is revealed: "The self is a *sub-jectum*; it is under the

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[457] Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*. trans. R. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985), p.91.

[458] Such a statement appears problematic from a theological as well as philosophical perspective. From a philosophical position it is difficult to conceive of human relations which are wholly "unconditional," in the sense that relations are enabled by conditioning and mediation. Although every person may be considered to be unique, without conventions, rules and language, that uniqueness would remain undiscovered and unexpressed. From a theological perspective, only God the Creator is unconditioned, creation is *creatio ex nihilo* and therefore can offer love unconditionally, whereas creaturely life is conditional and dependent.

[459] One must not gain the wrong impression that "height" for Levinas implies distance, although the metaphor is not employed in spatial terms. As Robert Gibbs comments: "This paradox of height and lowliness only shows further what sort of height Levinas is describing: neither stars and the heavens nor the high and mighty (rich and famous) but the one who, in standing up, rises above me, with an ethical demand." R. Gibbs, "Height and Nearness: Jewish Dimensions of Radical Ethics," in *Ethics as First Philosophy. The Significance of Emmanuel Levinas for Philosophy, Literature and Religion*. ed. by A.T. Peperzak, London/ New York: Routledge, 1995), p.15. In his later work, Levinas employs terms such as "proximity," "neighbour," and "the approach" to refer to the self's relationship with the Other, which again do not refer to spatial contiguity. E. Levinas, *Other Than Being or Beyond Essence*. trans. by Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), pp. 48, 101. Although, there remains separation between the Self and the Other, ethics takes place in the approach towards the Other, in the ever moving forward towards the Other, and in opening of the self to the Other. ibid., p.84.

[460] Beavers, pp.92. He adds: "Contact with a transcendent alterity is ethical contact because the relation between self and other (that does not succeed in merging self and other) is maintained precisely as the obligation not to reduce the other to the self, that is not to kill the other" ibid., pp.103.

[461] Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 200.

[462] Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p.171.

weight of the universe, responsible for everything."[463] This picks up on the importance of the concept of encounter and challenge, and of finding oneself in relation to the Other, that was developed in the previous chapter.

If we apply this thinking to the Divine-human relationship, we are perfectly justified in holding to the asymmetry of the relationship, the "height" of God. God, as Levinas says, is the "Most High" (*du Tres Haut*).[464] Levinas' position here will be appropriated along Christian lines, contrary to his opposition to the concept of the Incarnation.[465] It may be said that God's "height" comes from not only the fact that in traditional theology God is the creator and we are His creatures, but also from our inability to grasp Him fully with the representations of our consciousness. In addition, asymmetry arises from the unconditional nature of God's Self-offering. God too is "naked" and "nude" in the face of our idolatry and ultimately exposed to our violence on the cross. We live in the proximiity of God's commands, of His calling of us to respond to His reality. His Spirit disrupts, calls into question, but is also, in the words of John 16, our true "teacher." In our relationship with Him we are rightly *sub-jectum*, that is, the true meaning of our subjectivity is revealed as beings destined to be in relationship with Him. Thus, God's asymmetry as "the Most High" is at least analogous with the asymmetry which Levinas has noted in human relationships, which gives further credence to the use of the Personalist Model.

There is, however, a legitimate negative analogy, which cannot be overcome. According to Levinas, although, an other person, P, has "height" in relation to the self, X, in P's

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[463] Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, p.116.

[464] Levinas, "God and Philosophy," in *Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*. ed. A. Peperzak, R. Bernasconi & S. Critchley. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), pp.141. cf. *Totality and Infinity*, p.34. The term comes from the Hebrew *El Alyon*.

[465] Levinas claims that direct encounter with God is a Christian falsity. However, I doubt whether this is even a fair representation of the Jewish position. There is a dialectic in the Hebrew tradition between a physical conception of God's presence (both Moses and Jacob see God "face to face", Exodus 33.11; Gen 32.30), and a more apophatic strain, which emphasises the transcendence of God, that seeing God would obliterate a person (Exodus 33.20; Judges 6.22). What is clear is that there is a strong tradition of theophany in Hebrew Scripture of meeting with God's personal presence and one of the verbs used is *r'h*, to see or have visions. According to the Christian understanding we encounter God in the person of a particular human being, which does not banish the question of mediation, but is the only way in which substantial knowledge of the Divine is to be obtained. There is no reason to follow Levinas in holding that the Incarnation should bring about an infringement of Divine transcendence; after all, according to the Personalist Model, the Incarnate God would still be an Other, who by Levinas' own definition escapes the representing consciousness. Moreover, in the doctrine of the Trinity, there is always a *hypostasis* of the Godhead, which remains transcendent, namely, the Father. More generally, intimacy does not banish mystery and transcendence, rather it heightens or extenuates it.

encounter with X, X is also the "Other" for P, and hence, "comes from on high," not as self but as Other. "Otherness" is to be predicated of both sides of the relationship. Here a negative analogy with human interpersonal relations is clear. God's knowing is different from our means of knowing, and as the omniscient creator of humankind God knows "what it is like to be" each human person. In this privileged position and as a result of His all-loving nature, the other person is not vulnerable to God, in the sense of being open to exploitation and oppression by the Divine. The human creature does not "teach" the Divine, nor reveal what is previously unknown, nor disrupt the Divine "subjectivity." Nonetheless, the "otherness" of the creature, "the space to be a self," is not absorbed by the Divine Other. This seems to be fundamentally compatible with the Christian *telos*, of a full relationship with the Triune God, one where particularity of the creature is respected just as are the distinctness of the *tres hypostaseis* in the Trinity. Moreover, God's human creation constitutes an ethical demand on the Divine,[466] which means that there is a sense in which God's creation does possess "height," but in a much weaker sense than the "height" predicated at the interpersonal or Divine-to-human levels.[467]

I.03) Equality and Asymmetry.

A less metaphysically charged position than Levinas', will help us to develop the relationship between asymmetry and mutuality. Robert Solomon argues that equality is a necessary presupposition for love, but his conception of equality is more nuanced than that of Brummer's. It is quite clear from a first glance at human relationships that equality does not equate to "egalitarianism": one person's job may be more important than their partner's, one person may be more in love than the other, one person may be more analytic, the other

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[466] Some may doubt that creation does have this ethical pull on God. For example, see Brian Davies' treatment of the problem of evil in, B. Davies, *Thinking About God* (London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), ch.8.

[467] Levinas' account of Divine-human asymmetry is even stronger than my use of his arguments. For example, he rejects Buber's Personalism on the grounds that the *Ich-Du* relationship assumes an unacceptable equality, familiarity and simple reciprocity with God. Neither *toi* nor *vous* are appropriate forms of addressing God. E. Levinas, "Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel and Philosophy," in *Outside the Subject*, trans. by M.B. Smith (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 21-39; "Martin Buber and the Theory of Knowledge," in *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, ed. P. Schlipp and M. Friedman (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1967), pp.133-150. Levinas favours the third person of *il/ille*, hence referring to the otherness of God as *illeity* (He-ness). This indicates that God is not just another Other, but radically at the foundation of all alterity. The concept of *illeity* also refers to the mediated encounter with God, that God is always the "third party" mediated by some second party, which Levinas takes to be the human Other. As has been argued earlier, this position is denied by the Christian concept of the Incarnation. See also Andrew Kelly, "Reciprocity and the Height of God: A Defence of Buber against Levinas," *Sophia*, Vol. 34 (1995), pp. 65-73.

more intuitive, and so on. Nevertheless, Solomon wishes to contend that equality is a precondition of romantic love: "Thus Stendhal says that 'love creates where it does not find equals,' and we noted.... Cinderella must become a princess in the eyes of her prince in order to love and be loved by him, not as a matter of propriety but as a precondition of romance."[468] We have already argued in the previous chapter that in the Incarnation there is a Divine condescension and accommodation.[469] There is a movement in the other direction, namely, the exaltation of the human. His creatures are to become "God's children"(I Jn.3.2), and through faith His adopted sons (Gal.4.5).

Such a dialectic between asymmetry and equality can be seen within the trinitarian relations of God Himself. An element of subordination seems inevitable in the trinitarian relations if we are to be faithful to the biblical account. This has traditionally been worked out in terms of the *taxis* (order) of trinitarian relations.[470] Thus, the Son is sent by the Father and is obedient to Him, humbling himself so that He may point to his Father. The Spirit is sent by the Father through the Son, and is self-effacing in revealing the Father through the Son, acting as their "go-between." The Father is the transcendent locus of the Godhead; for the Eastern Church Fathers the Father is the principle of the Godhead (*arche*). For the Cappadocian Fathers an ordering of the Divine *hypostaseis* in the economy of salvation (*ad extra*) is founded upon an ordering within God *ad intra* represented by the terms ungenerated (*agennesia*), generated (*gennesis*) and proceeding (*ekporeusis*). Nonetheless, such an element of subordination does not forsake the equality of the trinitarian *hypostaseis*, in that both the Son and the Spirit are true God. It was the heresy of "subordinationism" which denied that; subordination without equality. Although the Son and Spirit constituted by the Father as *arche* are His "two hands," to use St. Irenaeus phrase, they are also mutually constitute the Father.[471] The ordering of the

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[468] Solomon, *About Love*, pp.289-290.

[469] Phil.2.8, cf. Mtt.11.29.

[470] *Taxis* captures the Pauline understanding of subordination as order (Eph.5.21), which assumes a social structure with responsibilities (see Delling, *TDNT* VIII, pp.40f). T.F. Torrance opposes the hierarchical ordering of the Divine *hypostaseis*, claiming that any ordering is soteriological not economic. T.F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Perspectives: toward doctrinal agreement* (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1994), p.32. However, this threatens to divide the economic from the immanent Trinity.

[471] On this point Colin Gunton writes: "the Father is what he is not only because he begets the Son, but also because the Son responds in the way made known in his obedience as incarnate, and so can be understood to be the one who shares in the constitution of the being of God by means of his eternal response of obedience and love." The same is true of the Spirit who "ensures that the love of the Father and Son is not simply mutual love." *The Promise of Trinitarian*, p.165.

relations are never one-sided, which would be to adopt a Neo-Platonist position. Rather there is the eternal reciprocity of *perichoresis*, which means that the ordering of the Godhead is never a torpid hierarchy of temporal origination, but an eternal movement of return constituting communion (*koinonia*). As Karl Barth has pointed out, this pattern is followed out elsewhere. Just as Jesus' humility was part of His divinity, so too, in the area of ecclesiology, it is only when the church truly serves the Lord that it has attained its true identity.

Solomon's first condition of equality is that there be "no pre-established hierarchy in the relationship,"[472] or at least, no major one, which would undermine true reciprocity.[473] Surely there *is* a "pre-established hierarchy" and "superiority" in the relationship between the Divine and the human? It might be helpful to distinguish between a "pre-established" ontological difference or hierarchy and the intentionality of both parties involved. God is altogether ontologically distinct, the font of all truth, goodness, and being, our creator and redeemer. However, the intention and action of God is both a movement towards humanity in the Divine accommodation of the Incarnation and the intended raising up of redeemed humanity to full relationship with the Divine. Thus, God's intention is not hierarchical; as Ephesians 5.21ff shows, Christ is "head" of the church, but because he does so in submissive love (v.25) a demeaning subordination is avoided. This fulfils Solomon's second criteria of equality, "mutual respect,"[474] which is re-enforced if we conceive of God, contrary to the Divine Fiat view, acting in a way which respects the relative autonomy of creatures. Reciprocal identification in the Divine-human relationship is only truly *defining* in the case of the human creature, not in the case of the Divine. Although God has become human and taken the human up into His very intra-trinitarian being in the Ascension of Christ, as the *Logos en sarx* this is an expression, rather than an alteration of the Divine nature. The Councils of the early Church tell us that God's nature is constant and self-sufficient; God creates not out of need but from His sovereign free will.

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[472] Solomon, *About Love*, p.297.
[473] "The teacher who becomes involved with a student quickly elevates him or her to an equal -whether this is warranted or not - and the role of teacher becomes an insignificant role in a script that is primarily romantic." ibid., p.290.
[474] ibid., p.293.

In conclusion, asymmetry in personal relationships does not necessarily lead to its dissolution into a form of impersonal relationship, such as a contractual or manipulative relationship. Differences do not outlaw mutuality and respect. Levinas teaches that asymmetry stems from the very possibility of the vulnerable self-revelation by the Other, in such a way that the Other is not subsumed or "totalised" by the self, but disrupts the order of the self and offers novelty. Asymmetry resides in the ontological fact that two parties *with*-stand each other. Yet it is also epistemological in that the self-revelation of the Other is not open to our manipulation. Despite the unambiguous ontological asymmetry between Creator and creature, in salvation history God initiates a movement of accommodation towards humanity (Incarnation), with the intent of exalting the human to full relationship with the Divine (*theosis*). Ontological asymmetry is compatible with levels of equality by intent, such as wishing to have a relationship of mutual exchange. This argument also re-enforces the position that God would respect the relative autonomy of creatures in Christian *metamorphosis*.

II.) The Second Negative Analogy: William Alston and the Problem of Internality.

A further apparent negative analogy of the Personalist model arises when we consider the Divine-human relationship specifically in its pneumatological form and expressly the biblical language of the Spirit "indwelling" or "abiding" (*menein/ oikein*) in the Christian believer.[475] Such language of indwelling refers to what Yves Congar describes as, "a definitive relationship of covenant with God and of enjoying communion with him on the one hand and, on the other, of being in a state in which one is the true temple in which God dwells and where he is given spiritual worship."[476] This type of communion is, *prima facie*, quite different from human interpersonal relationships. The Spirit is not embodied, so His actions, communication and presence are not directly recognisable to us in the way we can discern human communication and presence, by reference to a person's bodily behaviour.[477]

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[475] See I Cor. 3.16, 6.19; Rom.8.9,11; Eph.3.17; John14.16-17, 14.23; I Jn.4.12-13, 4.16.

[476] Congar, Vol.II, p.80.

[477] J. Macquarrie argues this point against the Personalism of Buber: "in any meeting between persons, there is an actual physical meeting, for a person is not a disembodied spirit. This physical aspect of the meeting is essential to it, for this is how words are spoken and heard, looks and gestures communicated and understood. It is very hard to suppose what a personal meeting or encounter could be like in the absence of the physical

For William Alston such reflections lead him to suggest that the New Testament stress on the indwelling of the Spirit may be characterised by its degree of "internality" in the life of the believer. Such "internality" might provide a powerful "negative analogy" to the Personalist model:

> The distinctive thrust of the interpersonal model lies in its construal of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit on the analogy of the moral influence one human being can exert on another by speech, by provision of a role model, and by emotional bonds. But all this leaves the parties involved external to each other in a fundamental way; they are separate, distinct persons, each with his or her own autonomy and integrity. Of course, human reationships can be more or less intimate; and at their most intimate they are even spoken of, figuratively, in the language of mutual indwelling - "I just feel that you are part of me", "I carry some of you around with me wherever I go". Unless the talk of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit can be interpreted in just such a figurative manner, the interpersonal model does not embody the appropriate sort of internality.[478]

Alston notes the language of "internal" communion or relationship in the New Testament, in which the Spirit is said to "fill", "permeate", "pervade"(*pleres pneumatos*) the believer with the fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit is said to be "poured out" into the believer. He compares this with Old Testament references to the Spirit as the *ruach* of Yahweh, the "wind", "breath" and "life", which can fill and pervade all. This scriptural evidence indicate that there are not the same kind of boundaries of separation between the Spirit and the believer as there are between two human persons. Alston argues that the goal of Christian living is that, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, believers "come to share in the very being of God."[479]

> The 'new birth' can be understood as the initiation in us of the divine life, this life being grafted onto us, so that we are living this life[480]

This Alston calls "life-sharing," a concept that was used by some Patristic writers, such as Irenaeus of Lyons. Alston warns that this is not some mystical absorption of the individual swallowed up in the all-powerful one; it is a case of participation not ontological identity. One of the reasons why Alston calls this "life sharing" is that the word "life" does not refer exclusively to conscious relationships.

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events which mediate it. Thus at best the revelatory event could be only analogous to an 'I-Thou' meeting, and remotely analogous at that." *Principles of Christian Theology*, p.93.

[478] W.P. Alston, "The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit," in *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*, ed. by T.V. Morris (Indiana: Notre Dame University Press, 1988), p.137.

[479] II Peter 1.4.

[480] Alston, "Indwelling of the Holy Spirit," p.139.

The Personalist Model developed in Chapter 3 does have some resources to meet Alston's challenge. To begin with, there is a third option regarding one's conception of indwelling, which Alston seems to have neglected, that is neither substantialist, nor figurative. The concept of reciprocal identification explicated above offers an indwelling which is a real sharing of subjective identities. Statements of the form, "I just feel that you are part of me," become more intelligible in this context if, as Solomon argues, romantic love involves "the intensive focus of mutual definition on a single individual, subjecting virtually every personal aspect of one's self to this process."[481] This is not a mere temporary engagement of the imagination and empathy, but refers to changes within my own subjective identity.

Alston's second point concerned the biblical language of "breath," "filling," "pouring out," which challenges the boundaries of interpersonal human relationship. In their usual usage these "actions" or "events" would be considered to have impersonal referents: "He filled the bath"; "The water was poured out of the jug." Moreover, they are one-sided actions. I am filled with the Spirit; the Spirit is poured out onto the believers. The question of the role of "impersonal" metaphors of the Spirit will be dealt with more thoroughly in Chapter 6. For now let us note here the comparison between the concept of personal presence, which in the previous chapter I argued had the power to affect a person and this pneumatological language. Personal presence may exude energy, excitement, calm, reassurance, mediated through verbal and non-verbal communication. Thus, the concept of *charisma*, which refers to the quality or power a person has to influence people, is etymologically linked to the actions of the Spirit (Grk: *kharis*), the grace and favour of God, in bestowing gifts and inspiring the believer. This shows that such pneumatological language is not inimical to the Personalist model.

The Christian conception of marriage, as the mystical union of two in "one flesh" (*henosis*),[482] also pushes personalist concepts to their bounds in an effort to describe the depth of interpersonal and Divine-human communion. Married life is the paradigm example of human "life-sharing," involving not only the day-to-day venture of reciprocal identification, but also the symbol of unity and love in the sexual act, an act which opens

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[481] Solomon, *About Love*, p.197.
[482] John Meyendorff, *Marriage: An Orthodox Perspective* (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1970), pp.21-27.

the possibility of being *totally* affected by the presence of the Other. The personalist metaphor of dialogue ceases to be a sufficient description at this point. Roger Scruton describes the aim of sexual desire:

> I seek to *unite you with your body*. I seek to summon your perspective into your flesh, so that it becomes identical with your flesh; I thereby at last *discover* your true individuality (your self) as a constituent of the physical world in which I move and act. I wish you to *be* your body, not in the straightforward sense in which this is always true, but in the metaphysical sense in which it can never be true, the sense of an identity between your 'unity of consciousness' and the animal unity of your body..... The burning of the soul in the flesh - the *llama de amor viva* of St. John of the Cross - is the symbol of all mystic unions, and the true reason for the identity of imagery between the poetry of desire and the poetry of worship.[483]

Mary Oliver argues that the Pauline language of "one flesh" opens up the possibility of talk of a "conjugal spirituality," seeing marriage as the coming together of two persons in a "conjugal body" and a "conjugal soul," which refer to the process of physical, psychological and spiritual reciprocal identification, with the de-centring of the self, the permeation of the two persons in each other's lives. What occurs in the ideal of marriage is:

> a spiritual reality which is both 'I' and 'not I,' 'Thou' and 'not Thou,' significantly and recognizably both two and one. When a pair goes from closeness to commitment, each comes to be partly other as well as self. It is no longer spiritually accurate to consider one alone, in isolation from the conjugal dimension which pervades it.[484]

From a theological perspective, union in marriage can be seen as an 'icon,' a 'sacrament' and 'microcosm of the unifying love of God," a reminder of Charles Williams' vision of the Kingdom of God as the "grand co-inherence of all things."[485]

> The union of partners in marriage as held by the author of Ephesians is meant to anticipate the union of all things in Christ. Christ's work brings together 'everything in heaven and on earth'(Eph. 1.10; 2.6). Christ's

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[483] R. Scruton, *Sexual Desire. A Philosophical Investigation* (London: Phoenix (Orion Books Ltd., 1986), p.128.

[484] Mary A. Oliver McPherson, *Conjugal Spirituality: The Primacy of Mutual Love in Christian Tradition* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1994), p. 45. Equally, one may wish to add, the sacrament of marriage when properly undertaken involves, what Christos Yannaras terms, a growth of "personal distinctiveness and freedom." C. Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality*. trans. Elizabeth Briere (New York, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1984), pp. 158ff. This involves the "transformation of the natural sexual impulse [and self-sufficiency] into an event of *personal* communion," and ultimately "ecclesial communion." ibid., pp.161. Yannaras' conception of asceticism in marriage has an affinity with Oliver's concept of 'conjugal spirituality.'

[485] Compare this with C. Yannaras' comment that: "True *eros* - through self-emptying and self-offering - for one person in the communion of marriage creates a hypostatic possibility of relationship with all the members of Christ's body." ibid., p. 167.

> reconciling work brings into one body Gentiles and Jews 'so as to create out of the two a single new humanity in himself, thereby making peace'(2.16; 3.6).[486]

The *mysterion mega* in Ephesians 5 of the association between marriage and the unity between Christ and His Church is founded on the sacrificial self-donation of Christ to His spouse the Church, an act which is brought to focus in the Eucharist.[487] Husbands are told, in a clear image of union, to "love their wives like their own body"(Eph.5.28b), paralleling Christ's action in submissive love, cleansing, presenting,[488] nourishing and cherishing the church.[489] Despite the way that the imagery of "one flesh" pushes at the bounds of personalist language, it is still being employed in a relational context, in which although one party (the church) may be in a position of subordination (to Christ as the "head"), mutual self-giving love of both rules out absorption of one by the other.[490] Let us note that Christ's love for the Church is a covenant love, making love an 'icon' of that covenant, and ought to have the covenantal qualities of commitment, promise and obligation, durability and steadfast love.[491] Although this response to Alston's perceived "negative analogy" of the Personalist model does not remove all the complications of this difficult area of theology, it is hoped that it has been shown that the Personalist model can go some way to meet his point. If it does not do so perfectly, that merely shows the limit of precision or degree of fit that any model, by its very nature, can offer.

Alston's discussion of this matter provides us with more material for reflection, for he gives us some further analogies to help us conceive Divine-human life-sharing. All the analogies envisage an extension of the boundaries that usually apply to interpersonal human relationships. The first analogy he gives revolves around imagining some neural

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[486] Thatcher, p. 98.

[487] Christos Yannaras concurs: "The mystery of marriage *saves* natural *eros* - which means *making it a hypostasis* in the life of the Church - precisely because it grafts it into asceticism which is the eucharistic mode of existence. Under its guidance natural love becomes like the love of the Church, which accepted crucifixion." Yannaras, p.165

[488] Verse 26 refers to sanctification and cleansing both sacrificial motifs in Jewish thought. The washing in the "waterbath" most probably refers to the Jewish practice of a ceremonial washing of the bride before betrothal. The symbolism of baptism may also be alluded to: "The cleansing which takes place in Baptism, which is connected with the metaphor of the waterbath but is founded in the blood of Christ." Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Ephesians. A Commentary*. trans. Helen Heron (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), p.250.

[489] Verse 29 again a mixture of nuptial and sacrificial imagery.

[490] Adrian Thatcher argues that the analogy between the unity of Christ and the Church can be amended to remove "the offensive gender identification of the male marriage partner with the male Christ, and male initiative with divine initiative." Thatcher, p.92.

connection between brains so that our mental lives are shared: "When you are moved by a scene I will thereby be moved with your feelings; when you find a remark distasteful I will thereby find it distasteful."[492] This analogy would only avoid the "take-over" model if it was possible to talk of two subjects and, hence, possible to distinguish my mental life from yours. Moreover there would have to be an acceptance by both parties of this form of "life sharing" and a growing convergence of goals, intentions and desires. These would be the minimum conditions for talk of real "sharing," instead of positing the creation of a new mental entity, which could jeopardise both numerical and qualitative personal identity, rather like a case of Parfitian brain fusion. Yet it is unclear that given these qualifications of the analogy, it actually captures the degree of "internality" of the Spirit's action which Alston has highlighted. For example, is it always the case that we can distinguish between the Divine mental life and our own in the case of indwelling?

This is why Alston describes the Spirit's action in relation to the human person as "carried on below the level of consciousness."[493] One of the ways that Alston conceives *metamorphosis* being carried out at an interpersonal level, is that the Spirit "could bring it about that facets of the person's present life appear to him in an unfavourable light and that the life of *agape* appears to him as highly attractive, without this being consciously taken by the individual as a communication from God."[494] This move appears to place the operation of the Spirit in the realm of manipulation, rather than personal relationship, and Alston seems to concur with such a categorisation when he writes of the Spirit's action as "'secret' manipulation of the subject's ideational processes."[495] It raises again the questions of the compatibility of such action with human freedom and personal identity, in short the issue of how such action may be called personal. It also begs the question, which Alston himself asks of the "Divine Fiat" position, namely: "If God is to transform me into a saint by a fiat why should he do such an incomplete job of it.....and why should the transformation be strung over such an extended period?"[496] An appeal to a "greater good" argument at this point does not possess the advantages of a Personalist account.

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[491] ibid., p. 93. The use of the concept of icon in relation to marriage is derived from Vigen Guroian, *Ethics After Christendom: Toward an Ecclesial Christian Ethic* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), ch.3.
[492] Alston, "The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit," p.142.
[493] ibid., p.134.
[494] ibid., p.132.
[495] ibid., p.133.
[496] ibid., p.135.

III.) The Third Negative Analogy: The Biblical Language of Incorporation.

From another perspective, that of the Pauline language of incorporation, a negative analogy of a very like kind to that raised by Alston's analysis, presents itself. The language of incorporation raises the question of whether the Personalist model provides a strong enough conception of unity to do justice to such a biblical motif. The language of incorporation has theological breadth, for it could provide systematic connections between the doctrines of the Trinity, ecclesiology, the sacraments, and life after death.

It has already been argued in Chapter 1 (section III.04) that the link between the nature of intra-trinitarian relations and the concept of the indwelling of the Spirit in the believer, in the Johannine "Farewell Discourses," is at best a weak analogy. Moreover, it is not clear that the language of indwelling is equivalent to that of incorporation, which is Pauline in origin and appears to be a stronger conception of inclusion. Paul famously talks of believers being "in Christ"("en Christo") (Gal.3.28; Rom.8.1; Phil.3.8), and also the converse, that Christ is in believers (Rom.8.10; Gal.2.20).[497] Christ is not just an individual but in some sense an incorporating figure, contrasted by Paul with Adam. Paul says that the Church is one body in Christ (Rom.12.4ff; I Cor.12.12-30). One possible interpretation of this language is that Paul's "corporate Christ" motif stems from the Hebrew notion of corporate personality. Such a notion conceives of an individual (like the patriarchs, or the Messiah) as including other people within himself, and rests on a very strong view of the solidarity of the people of Israel.[498]

It is difficult to give plausibility to the idea of corporate or representative figures conceived of in ontological terms:

> What we do not have is any notion that such representative figures actually exist, and incorporate - without any loss of identity on either side - those whom they represent. Again, we can have very close relationships with others, but cannot be *in* them, especially without losing individuality.[499]

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[497] Ziesler comments on this distinction: "..believers *exist* in Christ, but Christ is *active* in believers, and so the notions are not exactly parallel. The acting nature of the second notion is particularly evident where 'in' is not a separate preposition but is a prefix to a verb." J. Ziesler, *Pauline Christianity*, rev.ed. (Oxford: OUP, 1990), p.50).

[498] This would fit rather well with David Brown's sociological understanding of self-consciousness in his account of the doctrine of the Trinity. D. Brown, "Trinitarian Personhood and Individuality", pp. 48-75.

[499] Ziesler, p.63.

However, the main reason for rejecting this interpretation is that it has been severely questioned by recent Old Testament scholarship. J.R. Porter showed that most of the Old Testament passages adduced to support 'corporate personality' proved on examination to support instead 'corporate legal responsibility'.[500] J.W. Rogerson argues that it is not the case that man in primitive society had no consciousness that he was an individual, but rather that he had no individual rights.[501] Ziesler sums up the research:

> while the Old Testament and later Judaism easily conceived of representative figures, it is not clear that they ever envisaged corporate figures, whether kings, patriarchs, Adam, or anyone else. We saw that Adam could be Everyman, but found no good reason to suppose that as an individual he could include other individuals.[502]

One of the clues to unravelling the meaning of the corporate language, Ziesler argues, is given in the equivalence of Paul's phrase "in Christ" and "in the Spirit", as shown in Romans 8.

> In Paul too the Spirit is power, divine power, which liberates from other powers such as Law, sin, and death , and which produces the ethical fruits and the gifts of service that mark the new life of the Christian community. To be in Christ now is to be in the Spirit, i.e. within the sphere of his power. That is to say, the equivalence of the two expressions indicates that Christ as exalted is now a centre of power, so that to be in him means, not to be in his person, but to be in his sphere of power.[503]

Such an understanding of the Pauline language of incorporation safeguards the identity of both the believer and Christ, it is not based on absorption, rather on a conception of "power" worked out in a relational way. Incorporation does not equate to ontological incorporation or identification, in the sense of *numerical identity* with the Triune God.

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[500] J.R. Porter, "The Legal Aspects of the Concept of 'Corporate Personality' in the Old Testament", *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. XV (1965), pp.361-80.

[501] R.W. Rogerson, "The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality: A Re-examination", *Journal of Theological Studies.*, Vol. XXI (1970), pp.1-16.

[502] Ziesler, p. 63.

[503] ibid.. The other clues that Ziesler finds to support this interpretation are, first, that the 'powers' or dominations opposing Christ are described in similar language (e.g. to be "under" or "in" the law[Rom3.19a] or sin [Rom.3.9; I Cor.15.56; Gal.3.22]. Secondly, "en Christo" expressions often come with a stress which "frequently falls on belonging to Christ in the sense of being within his sphere of power and influence" ibid., pp.64. cf. I Cor.1:30. He claims his proposal explains phrases such as "boasting in Christ" [Rom15.17], which has the best sense if all Paul's achievements "are done in his power and under his lordship, and thus reflect Christ's working in and through him." ibid.. It explains the "body of Christ" language which " is in no way equivalent to Christ as a person, but is the community of those who live by and under the divine power." ibid., pp.65, cf. I Cor 12.12-31 where "the church is the body empowered and controlled and defined by the Spirit". Equally the concept of 'members of Christ' found in I Cor.12 "means that Christians belong to and are parts of the corporate entity that derives its existence from Christ through the Spirit. It does not mean that they make up in the way that members of a football club make up that club. Otherwise the identity either of Christ or of members would be lost, and such a loss of identity is never contemplated by Paul." ibid..

Change is not ontological in kind, but qualitative and relational: the Christian is a new relation with God, has new relational properties, such as faith and undergoes a qualitative change of the orientation of her personality in sanctification. The Spirit's mediation of the power of Christ may be conceived to operate in terms of the Spirit's personal presence, rather than in a purely impersonal and causal manner. In sum, the theme of incorporation is compatible with the Personalist Model, and one may also note a greater similarity between the Pauline language of *incorporation* and Johannine *indwelling* than one may at first have thought.

IV.) The Fourth Negative Analogy: Death and New Life.

Our fourth proposed negative analogy suggests that the Personalist Model is inadequate because it cannot capture the nature of the transformation of the person in conversion, regeneration and sanctification, in short, Christian *metamorphosis*. The state which humankind finds itself in, according to the Pauline conception, is that of death to sin (Romans 4.25; 6.11; Ephesians 2.1). The state, which the believer is changed into, is that of "new life" in both Paul and John.[504] The objection to the Personalist Model which arises is that the conception of transformation presented as a result of the schema of encounter and personal presence, plus acceptance or response on the part of the human, and reciprocal identification or exchange, fails to capture this radical transition from old to new, from death to life. The objector may not wish to dispute the fact of a change in personality occurring as a result of interpersonal human relationships, but s/he would wish to contend that in the case of the Divine-human relationship there is not only a change in personality, but a *new creation*. This *metamorphosis* has a central eschatological dynamic to it: the new creation is called into existence and is forged in the pull of the future glory and only fully re-created in the eschaton. The model of interpersonal relationships is incapable of being used as a tool to further explicate this reality.

Much of the strength of this objection depends on the meaning of the word "new", in its biblical use. Does the word mean the creation of something wholly new, with no continuity with what has gone before, a new creation *ex nihilo*? Or is it that a new reality has been brought about in and out of the old, in a dynamic of discontinuity and continuity? This question may be adjudicated by looking more closely at Paul's theology surrounding

the concept of "new creation." For Paul salvation is a matter of transition from the dominion of one power to that of another, from the dominion of sin and thus, a liberation from one's sinful nature (*sarx*), the power of the Law, from wrath of God, and the clutches of demonic powers, to the dominion of the risen Christ, to the state of being *en Christos*. The key to Paul's language of "death" and "new life" is the central and paradigmatic event of Christ's dying and rising. John Ziesler explains:

> In effect, dying *with* Christ is the way to become *in* Christ, for the first concerns transfer from the old domination, and the second concerns the consequent existence under the new power, Christ. The key is the faith which is response to Christ: by faith one is accepted by God and restored to right relationship; by precisely that same faith one dies to the old securities and goals and powers; and by faith one finds new life, in Christ.[505]

What is "new" in this state of liberation? As Ziesler analyses Paul there is a double soteriological effect, "both a new status, a new relationship, and a new existence, a new way of living."[506] The transfer from the old bondage of sin and death is a result of a change in relationship to God, a reconciliation and hence, a new status in relation to God (justification). What is required is a wholehearted following of the new Master, Christ (Rom.6.12-14; 16-20), in the newly granted freedom to serve the Spirit (Rom.7.6). The fulfilment of this new form of existence will mirror that of Christ's resurrection, and is eternal life (Rom.6.21-3). This does not constitute an ontological change, as the change, as was noted in the last section, is in terms of relations, relational properties and qualities. New creation is not a re-creation *ex nihilo*.[507] Rather the terms "old" and "new" have specific relational references, to the dominion of sin and Christ respectively. The person *in Christ* still has personal continuity with the whole span of his created existence; *numerical* identity is maintained. What changes is the relational context of one's being, now *in* relation to Christ and the Spirit, and no longer within the power of the matrix of sin. What follows is the gradual change of qualitative identity, in regeneration and sanctification, as the personality is re-orientated by its relation with Christ and the Spirit, to full relation

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[504] Eph.2.4-6; John.5.24.
[505] Ziesler, p.97.
[506] ibid., p.95.
[507] This is also clear from John's Gospel. To be "born again", is not, as Nicodemus mistook the phrase, to be born "a second time"(John.3.4). Rather the Greek *anothen* may mean 'from above' or 'again', and in John's Gospel *anothen* primarily has the former meaning (John 3.31; 19.11, 23). What is meant is that "rebirth" is the work of the Spirit, and what is being focused upon is the need for spiritual transformation, a cleansing and renewal of the 'heart'(3.5).

with the Godhead. The process is gradual as extensive qualitative change, like instantaneous radical change to the ship of Theseus, would dissolve numerical identity.

This dynamic of discontinuity, yet continuity, is an aspect of Paul's partially realised eschatology. Tension remains between the old and new order, which comes out particularly in Paul's ethics. Hence, a real need for vigilance and a struggle is required to continue to "walk by the Spirit" (I Cor.10.12-13; Phil.3.12). The new life in all its fullness is an eschatological reality.[508] When Paul does speak of the resurrection, he talks of a "spiritual body"(I Cor.15.35-44). This is a concept which suggests both continuity and discontinuity. Continuity, indicated by the metaphor of the seed, is not by nature or by right, but by a Divine act reconstituting a person's *soma* and ensuring sameness of personality such that the numerical identity of this person remains the same. There is discontinuity, in that the *soma* is "spiritual." That is its place is in the dominion of God, the new order not of flesh and blood.

Prima facie this looks like a 'ship of Theseus' type case, with the parts being replaced but the form remaining constant (qualitative change). However, if Paul's account is correct, although personal identity is ensured, it is questionable whether a person would be exactly the same *kind* of thing, viz. a human being. For human beings do not have "spiritual" bodies,[509] and the nature of the physical constitution of a human being is part of the species' real essence. Nonetheless, it may be argued that a specifically physical body is not of the essence of human persons created by God. Whatever way one may wish to argue on that score, my point is merely that Christian *metamorphosis* does involve some ontological change. It is not a purely psychological or relational change. Yet, it is also change that does not put under question the continuity of personal identity. The resurrected person would still have the same personality/soul/spirit incarnate in a 'human-like' body. The type of relation that human persons now have with God is directly associated with the ontological outcome enacted in the eschaton, the re-ordering of God's creation. As Paul

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[508] In his early epistles Paul talks of "suffering with Christ," and "dying with Christ", but never "raised with Christ". In his later epistles he talks of "being saved", "we will be saved", which suggests a process of realisation, rather than a completed event. The gift of the Spirit is termed an *arrabon* (II Cor.1.22; 5.5; cf. Eph.1.14), a down-payment, a first-instalment of the future inheritance of the Kingdom.

[509] The nature of the "spiritual body" is testified to in the Johannine resurrection appearances. It may be touched, but it can also move through closed spaces.

writes, these ontological changes take place "in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet"(v.52a).

Is the Personalist Model incapable of being used as a tool to explicate this Pauline language of "death" and "new life"? *La Vita Nuova* (The New Life) is the title of Dante's great "autobiographical" precursor to his famous *Divina Comedia*. It concerns his encounter with Beatrice, who is to become his beloved, and the *new* life that flows from, what is for Dante, this ephiphanic meeting. As an instance of romantic love it appears to be rather undeveloped and a candidate for infatuation.[510] Dante's purpose is not psychological realism as such, but to reflect on the significance of romantic love using the tools of theologically informed narrative and poetry. Infatuation involves self-deception and unrealistic expectations.[511] The fruits of Dante's encounter are not illusory and self-conceited. When Dante first meets Beatrice he is affected at all levels, spirit, mind and body (even the liver!): "*Ecce deus fortior me, qui veniens dominabitur mihi.*"[512] According to R.D. Ellis at the heart of the "new life" experience of romantic love is the idea of the stimulation and provocation of the movement of consciousness, "consciousness must transcend itself in order to exist."[513] This idea may be compared to Richard of St. Victor's conception of the self-transcending charity of ecstatic love. Ellis' position is predicated on his phenomenological analysis of consciousness as a "process," rather than something fixed:

> Living beings want not only to reduce their drives - to seek a state of rest, etropy, a low energy level, a condition of stasis - but we also want to continue existing with a certain degree of intensity, change, transformation, adventure, and 'aliveness.' The reason for this is that consciousness by its very nature is a pattern of change which occurs in a physical substratum such as the human body in interaction with other bodies and its environment. If the ontological status of consciousness *is* a certain kind of

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[510] It might be contended that this is not a fair observation, for it focuses on the events of *La Vita Nuova* alone, rather than the relationship of Dante to Beatrice over the whole range of his writings, and through Dante's pilgrimage toward ultimate salvation. Charles Williams makes such a point from the perspective of the *Paradiso*: "a state in which those first Beatrician encounters,...full of such a thrilling *tremendum*, seem almost paltry....compared to the massive whole of single and exchanged Love." C. Williams, *He Came Down From Heaven* (London, Faber & Faber), p.91. However, even with such a perspective Dante's relationship with Beatrice is not described with the psychological realism of extensive reciprocity.

[511] According to R.D. Ellis a degree of infatuation is involved even in mature romantic relationships, a "fetishization of the other's presence," but which is to be distinguished from infatuation experienced in a relationship which does not involve true reciprocity and exchange, by the inclusion of the "space of empathy" for the other person. Ellis, pp.111, 114-5.

[512] Dante, *La Vita Nuova*, trans.by Barbara Reynolds (Penguin, London, 1969), II.18-19.

[513] Ellis, p.48.

> change and transformation, then consciousness cannot continue to exist by continuing to be what it is. It must continue to seek transformation.[514]

As transformation of consciousness has a *direction* or *pattern*, stasis equates to the inability to unify one's consciousness in an open-ended way, which relates past, present and future.[515] For Ellis romantic love is a paradigmatic case of such transformation, brought about through the symbolisation of sexuality, the idealisation of the Other, the nature of exchange or reciprocal identification all of which lead to a "heightened consciousness," precisely what Dante describes as being affected at all levels of a person's psychosomatic unity.

Although Dante talks of being "ruled over" by Love, this is not a return to a Divine Fiat model; he is affected but not immobilised. It is of note that Dante actually describes the experience in a way not so far removed from the Pauline conception of a transition to a new power or dominion: "Behold a god more powerful than I who comes to rule over me". One may also note the similarity with Levinas' conception of the asymmetry involved in encountering the Other. Charles Williams takes up the theme which we saw was central to understanding Paul's conception of new creation, that of "dying and rising":

> To love is to die and live again; to live from a new root. Part of the experience of romantic love has been precisely that; the experience of being made new, the 'renovation' of nature, as Dante defined it in a particular experience of love.[516]

This echoes Ellis' thesis that one key condition of romantic love is *vulnerability*, readiness and need to be transformed and a willingness to "deconstruct" one's identity both by being open for transformation, taking the risk and in making space for the other person.[517]

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[514] ibid., p. 8.

[515] Ellis' analysis of behavioural patterns such as coquetry, sado-masochism, and romance addiction, maintains that they are motivated out of a fear of transformation, and of allowing an opening to a true space of empathy, and that by nature, they seek no lasting direction. For example: "The romance addict [the promiscuous] has too little sense of direction and thus meaning in life to overcome his own anxieties and fears - primarily fear of the unknown, of transformation, of the openness needed for a genuine space of empathy, and thus of genuine intimacy." ibid., pp.159-160. Their "inauthentic" behaviour is often a form of "temporary escape," for Ellis this indicates that the person is unable to unify his consciousness, to discover meaning and direction. The form of behaviour adopted just adds to the "fragmentation of consciousness" ibid., p.159.

[516] Williams, "The Practice of Substituted Love", in *Charles Williams: Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology*, p.221.

[517] Ellis, p. 129.

Moreover, the experience brings with it ego-transcending virtues: charity and humility. A new relationship achieves a new form of existence, in terms of the orientation of one's personality and the quality of one's relationships.[518] This is close to the ecstatic love that Richard of St. Victor describes, what Ellis would call, "a force which pulls us out of ourselves."[519] Ellis describes it as a transformation in which "one's *motivational structure* completely changes in the space of empathy" that one has created with the other.[520] For Dante there is an additional layer of meaning. In love one is changed into likeness with the source of love, a movement towards the "centre of the circle to which all parts of the circumference are in a similar relation"(XII.15). The reason why romantic love is so revelatory for Dante, and has such salvific potential, is because it is not merely a human event, but charged with the Divine. The energy and revivifying effects of romantic love founded in the source of love itself, is what Williams calls, following Coventry Patmore, "the revelation of an 'unknown mode of being.'"[521]

Williams maintains that the epiphany of romantic love rediscovers a prelapsarian awareness (or one might equally say a preview of eschatological reality):

> The primal knowledge is restored, and something like pardon restores something like innocence.... if only for a moment it flashes for a moment into the lover the life he was meant to possess instead of his own by the exposition in her life of the life she was meant to possess instead of her own. They are 'in love.'[522]

Charles Huttar comments this "gives one a double vision of the beloved, seeing through his or her ordinary humanness to the glory of a restored *Imago Dei* in that person".[523] As Williams puts it, "Both Beatrices are aspects of one Beatrice....Beatrice then, so the quality of Love reveals, is the hope of the blessed."[524] From his phenomenological analysis, Ellis

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[518] "Whenever and wherever she appeared, in the hope of receiving her miraculous salutation I felt I had not an enemy in the world. Indeed, I glowed with a flame of charity"(Dante, *Vita*, XI.1-7)
[519] Ellis, pp. 58, 238.
[520] Ellis, p 63. He goes on: "The easiest way to understand the nature of this change is by means of careful phenomenological reflection on the way the lover's entire life erupts into seemingly unbearable existential crisis when deprived of the unconditionally empathic situation when it is urgently craved - i.e., of the experience of *chagrin d'amour*." ibid., p.63.
[521] C. Williams, *The Figure of Beatrice: a study of Dante* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 1994), p.14
[522] C. Williams, "The Theology of Romantic Love," in *Charles Williams: Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology*, pp.77-78.
[523] Charles A. Huttar, "Arms and the Man: The Place of Beatrice in Charles Williams's Romantic Theology", in *Charles Williams: A Celebration*, ed. B.L. Horne (Gracewing: Leominster, 1995), p.65
[524] *The Figure of Beatrice*, p. 27.

notes a similar point when he talks of being motivated in romantic love by a "vision of an abstract possibility," that is being transformed by the ideal potentiality latent in the other, as vulnerable (warranting compassion) and admirable (warranting adoration) and in oneself. The mutual vision of the lovers as potentially ideal, draws out both the possibility of the relationship, and helps to actualise transformation.

> The pull of love is thus the pull of the other's ideal potential, as yet unactualized or struggling to maintain its actual existence under hostile or unsupportive circumstances, which pulls us to relate to it as such and thus to assist its actualisation in a concrete sense, while by doing so we awaken our own consciousness out of complacent sameness and into transcendence and radical transformation.[525]

This connects with the concept of a creature's "latent true nature" to be developed in Chapter 5, and the analogy surely is that relationship with the Divine draws creatures towards their true destiny, as the image of God. My purpose here is not to develop, what Williams calls a "Romantic Theology,"[526] but to show that **LPR**, such as romantic love, do have the potential to act as a metaphor or analogy for new creation.

The essential constituents of what in romantic love causes transformation are all witnessed to by Dante. The physical presence of the beloved which affects; hence the role of desire and attraction. We have already argued for the importance of the encounter with the Divine presence, as the key initiating and affecting movement of the Divine-human relationship. Clearly in the case of Divine-human relations the physical constituents of romantic love are not in action: there is no physical attraction to a specific body, although the ecstatic experiences of mystics, of joy and bliss certainly are experienced physically. However, the desire for God is not a physical desire as such. The second constituent of the "new life" of romantic love is the element of self-transcendence, which is both an enlargement of our identifications and a dissolution of, what one psychologist calls, the boundaries of our ego, that is, the cognitive, emotional structures which define the self.[527] In a true response to the presence of another person one is taken out of oneself, and in the

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[525] Ellis, p.53. It is also interesting to compare R.C. Solomon's argument that idealisation of one's beloved aids transformation and mutual. Solomon, p.203.

[526] C. Williams, "The Theology of Romantic Love," in *He Came Down From Heaven*, pp.62-82.

[527] "The sudden release of oneself from oneself, the explosive pouring out of oneself into the beloved, and the dramatic surcease of loneliness accompanying this collapse of ego boundaries is experienced by most of us as ecstatic." M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Travelled* (London: Arrow Books, 1990), p.92, cf. pp. 99ff. It is worthy of note that Scott Peck talks of the "pouring out of oneself", which has strong echoes of the pneumatological language of being "filled" with the Spirit.

process of exchange or reciprocal identification one's subjective identity is enlarged and transformed.[528] Following the insights of Richard of St. Victor, this process of transformation of one's qualitative identity is taken a stage further when one's reciprocated love for the other is conjoined in a shared love which moves out to a third. This reflects God's ecstatic love, that love is always love for another, and further that the process of coalescing in a shared love for a third is a deepening of love. When love ceases to be the wonder and bliss of the first stage of the presence of the Other, and knows itself well enough for two to conjoin in love, recognising the ethical reality of having allowed the Other to reveal herself, it moves forward in a further action of love towards a third.[529] This constitutes an additional enlargement of oneself and a dissolution of one's ego boundaries.

If Christ is our beloved, then there is already a sense in which he has taken on our identity in the Incarnation (Charles Williams' theme of substitution[530]), and our response to this act of love is to share in His identity, mediated through the personal presence of the Spirit. These changes bring about a "new mode of existence," as has already be noted, a new relationship, a shared identity through reciprocal identification. Joseph Kupfer talks about ontological transformation, and distinguishes it from epistemological change:

> Ontologically, the lover collaborates in our transformation. Epistemologically, he or she inspires us to imagine ourselves better than we are... Our beloved helps us see our potential goodness and then promotes its realization.[531]

What can be said of this epistemological level of transformation. We have already seen in the case of Dante and Williams the way that love might be considered to cleanse the "doors of perception."[532] In romantic life this will consist of perceiving the ideal potential of the beloved, while in the Divine-human it is the openness and acceptance of faith which allows the Spirit to draw the believer towards their eschatological fulfilment. Acceptance

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[528] Joseph Kupfer, "Romantic Love", *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol.24 (1994), p.117.
[529] The thought of Levinas is clearly evident in this, in his analysis of revelation of the Other as primarily an ethical issue. The origin of the face of the Other is "illeity", the foundation of all other "seeming alterity" which "assures the condition of the possibility of ethics as the very possibility of the beyond" Levinas, "Meaning and Sense," p.64.
[530] C. Williams, "The Practice of Substituted Love," in *He Came Down From Heaven*, pp.82- 95.
[531] Kupfer, pp.115. I am unsure as to whether "ontology" is the best term to use here. What changes are one's relationships and one's subjective identity, but not the *kind of things that exist.*
[532] The phrase is from William Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell.* For further reference on this issue see Huttar, p.65.

involves a self-renunciation, an expansion of the boundaries of the self, and an act of, what Iris Murdoch, following Simone Weil, calls "attention":

> ...love...is an exercise of ....really *looking*. The difficulty is to keep the attention fixed upon the real situation and to prevent it from returning surreptitiously to the self with consolations of self-pity, resentment, fantasy....[533]

The epistemological change is required for the qualitative and relational changes that the Christian undergoes: there cannot be real exchange unless one is patiently attentive to the other. On the other hand, qualitative and relational change is needed for an adequate personal epistemology: unless the initial encounter releases one to step out of the confines of an egocentric perspective, then the self-emptying which is "attention" could never take place.

V.) The Type of Personalist Model.

Up until this point, the source of the Personalist Model presented has been loving personal relationships (**LPR**), which has been explicated largely employing an analogy with romantic relationships. However, romantic love is not the only possible interpersonal relationship which could be used as the source of the model, and the *type* of **LPR** adopted will effect the explanatory outcome of the model. In this section I wish to address the question of whether *one type* of **LPR** should be privileged as the primary source of a Personalist Model or whether different **LPR** should be used in a complementary fashion. The particular types of relationship we shall consider, in addition to romantic love, have often been associated with the classical Greek classification of loves, *philia*, *storge, eros* and *agape*, and are the parent-child relationship (*storge*, affection) and friendship (*philia*).[534]

V.01) The Model of Parent-Child Relationship.

The Syrian Church Fathers' employ the metaphor of the Spirit as *mother*, to capture both the life-giving power of the Spirit in Scripture and to explicate Christian rebirth.[535] Jürgen

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[533] Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of the Good* (London: ARK Paperbacks, 1985), p. 66.

[534] On the classification of the Greek loves see C.S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (London, Fontana, 1960).

[535] Jürgen Moltmann in his account of the use of the metaphor of "mother," mentions as examples Aphrates and Symeon of Mesopotamia, *The Fifty Homilies of Makarios*. He writes: "If believers are 'born' again from the Holy Spirit, then the Spirit is 'the mother' of God's children...If the Holy Spirit is 'the Comforter' (Paraclete), it comforts 'as a mother comforts.'" Moltmann, p.157, cf. pp.157-160.

Moltmann suggests the metaphor which emphasises "giving birth, nourishing, protecting and consoling, love's empathy and sympathy" expresses the "mutual intimacy, not sovereign and aweful distance" of the Spirit.[536] Within the mystical tradition the bridal imagery used by many mystics to describe the union of embrace between the Divine and human, is also explicated using the metaphor of the nurseling or suckling soul, feeding from the breasts of the nurse, who represents God.[537] In the case of the bridal metaphor, "union" is advanced in terms of reciprocal identification between the lovers, but most vividly via the metaphor of the embrace in love making. Nelson Pike summarises what he considers to be at the heart of the bridal image of union in many of the mystics:

> In the sexual embrace, the bride is typically covered by her mate. She is then enwrapped by him and submerged beneath him. He penetrates her as well - he saturates her with his issue.....the love act is most importantly associated with its tactile element. She feels her mate in contact with the outside of her body. She also feels him on the inside.....the female is the receiver of action. The male initiates and sustains the act - her action is reaction....involvement with another can become so intense and the relationship so close as to result in a loss of the distinction between oneself and one's partner.[538]

Here we have the key features of the Personalist model: both the asymmetry of the Divine initiative, and a metaphor for the opening of the boundaries of the self to allow for *perichoresis*, which in the Christian tradition is talked of in the language of "one flesh." He believes that the mother-child metaphor has a similar pattern:

> At the moment of feeding, the child is wrapped in its mother's arms and pressed closely to her body. It is submerged in its mother's embrace. The child takes the breast into its mouth. It is thus penetrated both by the mother and her milk....while the child can ask for (cry for) and anticipate the feeding, the child is fed by the mother. She initiates the action and it lasts only as long as she chooses to stay.[539]

Again, the *perichoresis* of the relationship is described, but the asymmetry is much more stark. Rather interestingly, Pike promotes the two metaphors as complementary. Thus, the bridal imagery, for example in John of the Cross, invokes an equality between the

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[536] ibid., p.159.
[537] In the employment of these two metaphors in conjunction there is, what Nelson Pike calls, "a gender jangle", because the soul is female, in line with the bridal metaphor, and suckles at the breast of the bridegroom, who is male. N. Pike, *Mystic Union. An Essay in the Phenomenology of Mysticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).
[538] ibid., pp.77-8.
[539] ibid., pp.78-9.

lovers,[540] which is qualified in the nursery metaphor by the asymmetry between the mother and the child:

> ...the nursery metaphor, like the bridal metaphor, carries the message of a symmetrical exchange between equals - the exchange of love in the form of touches, caresses, and kisses. But, of course, the nursery metaphor has more to it than that....The mother is not just the child's embracer, she is also its *feeder* - that is, more broadly, its *nurturer*, or, in a word, its *sustainer*. In this respect, the child is not an equal of the mother nor does it give a gift to the mother that correlates with the one received.[541]

What these examples of interpersonal metaphors show is that not only is a Personalist model able to capture essential aspects of the Divine-human relationship (the loss of the sense of the self of the *unio mystica*), but also that *within* a Personalist model of the Divine-human relationship, there may be many *sub*-models, using different types of human relationships to help describe the nature of the Divine-human relationship.

What does the parent-child model have in its favour? Certainly the parent-child model has an important pedigree in Scripture, with God designated as Father and His creatures as children of God, not by nature, but by grace.[542] Parental affection can "love the unlovable," and in the best cases does not love with expectations, "turns a blind eye to faults, revives easily after quarrels; just so charity suffers long and is kind and forgives."[543] It captures the primacy of the Divine initiative and underlines the asymmetry of the Divine-human relationship in a way intrinsic to the model. It is the parents who bring the child into the world and whose nurture is vital to the child's development. Moreover, on the parent-child model one can envisage parents being involved in the child's *formation*, shaping the motivational and noetic structures of the child without their voluntary consent. Thus parents shape their children by the nature of the rewards and punishment applied, controlling certain activities and exposure to the influences of the world, and using the pedagogical technique of selection and simplification of information given to the child.[544] Informed consent is not possible, the child is not fully mature and only a *potential* moral

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[540] John of the Cross in the *Spiritual Canticles* (stanzas xxx-xxxv) talks of the God being "wounded" and "captivated" and made "prisoner" by the love of the human soul.
[541] Pike, p.82.
[542] See Genesis 6.2ff; Hosea 11.1; Deut. 14.1; 32.6; Mtt.5.48; Mtt.6; Rom.8.15, 23; Gal.3.26; 4.5 etc.
[543] Lewis, p.38.
[544] On this point, Origen uses the analogy of adult communication with a child to explain the compatibility of God's ineffability and impassibility, on the one hand, with the anthropomorphisms of Scriptural language, on

agent not an actual one. Intuitively we do not find such parenting immoral, even though, according to Brummer's analysis of personal relationships, it is in a limited way, benignly formative. The analogy with the Divine-human situation is clear: the human creature is in a state of incapacity as a result of sin, and therefore, requires the initiative of the Divine and enabling action of the Spirit to reform the image of God in the person. We are not perfect children of God, we are called to be perfect (Mtt.5:48), and require the Spirit's eschatological action to nurture us to that end.

One may think that this model legitimises a return to a Divine Fiat type model. It is quite clear that the parent does not operate in a similar manner to, for example, Barth's description of the work of the Holy Spirit, in bringing about faith and its acknowledgement. Barth's conception of "total determination," of the internal penetration of one's mental states by the Spirit, is a form of what Alston describes as "secret manipulation," which a parent could never perform. It will be recalled that the Divine Fiat model failed to give a psychologically plausible account of how *metamorphosis* would affect the identity of the person. Bad parents may be excessively manipulative or controlling of their children, while good parents strike a balance between direction and freedom. It is useful here to draw upon some of the philosophical discussion of children's rights and the parent-child relationships.[545] Any idea that the lack of maturity of a child should sanction a *carte blanche* "paternalism," which extensively intervenes to determine the child, as if children were the property of adults,[546] is unacceptable.[547] A distinction between *formation* and *determination* needs to be maintained. As Joel Feinberg has argued, children should have a "right to an open future," which precisely rules out certain forms of parental intervention. This is also termed "rights-in-trust":

> When sophisticated autonomy rights are attributed to children who are clearly not yet capable of exercising them, their names refer to rights that are to be *saved* for the child until he is an adult, but which can be violated 'in advance,' so to speak, before the child is even in a position to exercise

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the other. He draws a distinction between "adult" and "baby language," the adult must utilise a form of language appropriate for the child (*Homilies on Jeremiah 18, 6*).

[545] There is a growing literature on this topic. Two important collections of essays are: W. Aiken and H. LaFollette, eds., *Whose Child? Children's Rights, Parental Authority, and State Power* (New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1980).

[546] Aristotle in one place in the *Nichomachean Ethics* 8.12 holds that children are the possession of their parents, analogous with a tooth or a piece of hair!

[547] John Locke criticises the "property" view in *Two Treatises of Civil Government*, Book I, Ch. VI. See also Robert Young, "In the Interests of Children and Adolescents," in *Whose Child?* eds. by LaFollette and Aiken, pp.181ff..

> them. The violating conduct guarantees *now* that when the child is an autonomous adult, certain key options will already be closed to him. His right while he is still a child is to have these future options kept open until he is fully formed self-determining adult capable of deciding among them.[548]

The child must be allowed the possibility of self-fulfilment[549] and the self-determination of being able to determine one's own "life circumstances" (e.g. career-type, life-style, religious attitude) and character.[550] Overbearing parental intervention stifles the development of character traits, such as self-confidence, deliberation, and discipline, which allow mature adults to be able to respond to the varying circumstances of life.[551] As Sharon Bishop argues, within the process of a particular habituation which is integral to the formation of a person:

> [I]t is not in general reasonable for us to aim for a particular outcome of our children's choices, but rather to develop their capacity to make choices, in a certain way, namely, autonomously....We do not want their selections to be coerced, threatened or bribed, and we do not want them to succumb easily to seductive advice or the bare weight of tradition....In short, we want them to have certain psychological strengths which will enable them to make sensible use of the right of self-determination.[552]

The model of the parent-child relationship requires the parent to treat the child as a developing person, for whom fully *personal* relations will be an end, for whom *over*-direction would be counter-productive.[553]

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[548] Joel Feinberg, "The Child's Right to an Open Future," in *Whose Child?* eds. by LaFollette and Aiken, pp.125-6.

[549] Feinberg defines the necessary elements of "self-fulfilment" as "the development of one's chief aptitudes into genuine talents in a life that gives them scope, an unfolding of all basic tendencies and inclinations, both those that are common to the species and those that are peculiar to the individual, and an active realization of the universal human propensities to plan, design and make order." ibid., p.143. It should be noted that in the Christian tradition "self-fulfilment" and "self-determination" are relative concepts. Fulfilment is only to be found in relation to the Divine, while "self-determination" if it is not to commit the *causa sui* fallacy, is relative to one's environment, one's intersubjective context and one's relation to God as Conserver of existence.

[550] Sharon Bishop gives the example of female children educated to fulfil certain domestic roles and uphold "feminine virtues." S. Bishop, "Children, Autonomy and the Right to Self-Determination," in *Whose Child?* eds. by LaFollette and Aiken, pp. 154 - 176.

[551] ibid., p.173.

[552] ibid., p.174.Again, from the Christian perspective the "autonomy" of the person is always a relative autonomy.

[553] Feinberg identifies two paradoxes in his account, which makes us recall Solomon's paradox of love and the paradox of grace discussed in chapter 3. First, the paradox of self-determination is that in order to beget an adult person who is self-determining one has to nurture the child, but the child has no determination over the nature of this nurture. In order for the child to *consent* to his formation, he would require values and pre-dispositions of his own, yet this begs the questions of how such predispositions were formed. The paradox of fulfilment takes a similar form. In order for a parent to discern what would be fulfilling for their child they need to perceive her skills, aptitudes, potentiality, yet these can be only fully apprehended when the person's

The very distinction between "adult" and "child" is a practical generalisation which should not hide the fact that human development is a process. A conception of early childhood as a form of blank slate, and adulthood as a fully formed personality is simply wrongheaded.[554] Development comes by degree.

> Right from the beginning the newborn infant has a kind of rudimentary character consisting of temperamental proclivities and a genetically fixed potential for the acquisition of various talents and skills. The standard sort of loving upbringing and a human social environment in the earliest years will be like water added to dehydrated food, filling it out and actualizing its stored-in tendencies....At a time so early that the questions of how to socialize and educate the child have not even arisen yet, the twig will be bent in a certain definite direction. From then on, the parents in promoting the child's eventual autonomy and well-being will have to respect that initial bias from hereditary and early environment. Thus from the beginning the child must - inevitably *will* - have some "input" in its own shaping, the extent of which will grow continuously even as the child's character itself does.[555]

There is, therefore, no time at which a parent is entitled to act as if the child were just a blank slate on which one imposes one's own personality. The Divine Fiat model is ruled out by this understanding of the child-parent relation. For instance, Barth's version of the Divine Fiat view maintains that the person is entirely passive until the effects of sin have been reversed and the gift of faith bestowed. On the parent-child model this would be to treat the child as having no "'input' in its own shaping."

Part of the success of the parent-child model will depend on whether the status of child serves as a good analogue for the human being effected by sin. The child is only a potential moral agent, cognitively and emotionally immature, whereas the adult human person is an actual moral agent who, according to Christian doctrine, does have full responsibility for his actions and human relations.[556] The response may come from a Feinberg-type position that the child is more than just a potential moral agent, but a

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nature is amply formed. Inversely the self-fulfilled adult requires formation, a formation which has to be informed and commenced before maturation.

[554] Feinberg points out: "Any 'mere child' beyond the stage of infancy is only a child in some respects, and already an adult in others...In the continuous development of the relative-adult out of the relative-child there is no point before which the child himself has no part in his own shaping, and after which he is the sole responsible maker of his own character and life plan." Feinberg, p.148.

[555] ibid., pp.149.

developing one and so may play some role in his/her determination. As Ann Palmeri points out: "The fact that we do sometimes hold children responsible for their actions and call upon them to justify their actions shows our willingness to recognize children's growing capacities and knowledge."[557] On the other hand, the child is dependent on his parents from birth, and hence does not have a choice whether or not to relate to them until much later in their lives. The human creature, although dependent on the Divine for creation and conservation, does have a decision whether or not to respond to the Divine initiative. This presents a negative analogy in relation to the parent-child model. In Christian Scripture Christ is said to be our "friend."[558] This suggests a level of reciprocity and equality by intention, which is not to be found in a parent-child relationship. Joseph Kupfer argues that parents and adult-children cannot become "friends" in the way which they can with their peers.[559] If this is the case, then a parent-child model may be insufficient to capture the biblical language of friendship with the Divine.

Although parents may have a powerful effect on their children's identity, by the very nature of child development, offspring are moving towards a life of independence from their parents. As C.S. Lewis observes, parental *gift-love* "must work towards its own abdication."[560] Although, this may in part mirror the element of *kenosis* in God's love, Christian *metamorphosis* is an eschatological movement of convergence, leading to a greater Divine-human communion, not less. Despite the uniqueness of the parent-child identification it can be selective, whereas we are seeking a model which captures the fullness of Divine-human exchange. During childhood there are some things that children

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[556] The distinction between a "potential" and an "actual" moral agent is made in Kathryn L. Plant, "Personal Encounter and the Concept of Man," *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol.1-4 (1980-83), pp. 54, 59-60.
[557] Ann Palmeri, "Childhood's End: Toward the Liberation of Children," in LaFollette and Aiken (eds.), *Whose Child?* p.116.
[558] John 15.13, 14; James 2.23; cf. II Chron.20.7; Isa.41.8.
[559] J. Kupfer, "Can Parents and Children Be Friends?" *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol.27 (1990), pp.15-26. Kupfer argues this is so because the parent-child relationship even in its adult form lacks the equality and autonomy of friendship relations, because of the history of the inherent asymmetry of the parent-child relationship during early childhood. Certain ingrained habits of parent-early childhood relationships remain, such as those attitudes of "respect," "loyalty," "accommodation" and "deference" ibid., p.17. Equally for parents a "parental" self-concept and habits and attitudes endure, all be it in a qualified form, beyond the passing of their child into adult life. He continues: "[T]he union between infant and parent is primitive in the sense of primal. Theirs is an intimacy which begins on a pre-conscious level for the infant, and continues on both conscious and subconscious level for both parent and child. They experience a pre-verbal and non-verbal sensuous bond, the intimacy of immediate, sensory communication." ibid., p.20. This, on the other hand, may be a good analogy for the relationship of the Divine as Conserver and Sustainer of the human being, although, we can hardly say that this has the psychological effect of parent-child habituation.
[560] Lewis, p.50.

do not wish to tell their parents. The same is the case for the adult offspring, for whom friends or partners are often the companions with whom certain disclosures are shared. Moreover, although the parental relationship, as Kupfner argues, helps to define who we are (our "self-concept") as adults we do not primarily choose to define ourselves in relation to our parents, and in our move towards independence we can critically stand back and choose whether or not certain habits or self-concept we inherit from our parent-child relationship are to be maintained.[561] Finally, C.S. Lewis notes that although parental affection is primarily a "need-love" on the part of the child and a "gift-love" on the part of the parents, "need-love" is also to be found on the side of the parents.[562] In both cases, there is a strong instinctive element. Traditional trinitarian theology would not maintain that God "needs to be needed," although someone like St. Richard of Victor, might talk of the way that God's trinitarian nature is such that "gift-love" overflows God's *ad intra* being. Thus, the parent-child model is not free of negative analogies.

V.02) Friendship

The model of friendship (*philia*) has biblical precedence in Jesus' relationship to his disciples. Friendship is also, as C.S. Lewis points out, "the least biological of our love," and hence, the most "spiritual," that is non-corporeal.[563] His point is that ideally friendship is not encumbered with the "need-love" of the parent-child relationship, nor the desire of romantic love. As friendship is freely assumed involving the mutuality and reciprocity of specific interests and projects, it can bracket off, to a certain extent, background, physical attraction and need. It can also be a less exclusive love than that of the parent-child relationship, or romantic love, in that a friendship should be open to the inclusion of a 'third.' All the elements of friendship are good analogues for the Divine-human relationship. Negative analogies remain. The asymmetry of the Divine-human relationship is less well represented than in the parent-child model. In addition, the reciprocal identification in friendship is not as encompassing as the model based on romantic love.

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[561] Kupfner agrees: "Of course, it may be *possible* to break habits, dismantle our attitudes towards our parents, even rearrange our self-concept. But not without rebuilding our very selves." "Can Parents and Children Be Friends?", p.18.

[562] Lewis, pp. 33-34.

[563] ibid., pp.60, 73. As Lewis is quite aware of the danger of pride in friendships, the potential for exclusivity and insularity, he proposes a reason why Scripture has infrequently used friendship as a metaphor for the highest love: "It is already, in actual fact, too spiritual to be a good symbol of Spiritual things.... God can safely represent Himself to us as Father and Husband because only a lunatic would think that He is physically

Solomon goes as far to say that friends "circumscribe our identity rather than define it as love does."[564] He qualifies this remark by writing:

> "Friendship, like love, involves identity, but because we do not think twice about the possibility of having several or even many friends, the share of one's identity that is tied up in any particular friend is only a relatively small proportion, far less than that demanded by romantic love.[565]

As we have seen, Kupfer argues that the identification in friendship is also less intense, in some respects, than that involved in a healthy parent-child relationship. Kupfer provides a helpful example:

> Friends certainly can enjoy one another's children and become very close to them. But they don't have the kind of vested interest in their welfare that grandparents do. We neither delight in our friends' children the way the children's grandparents do, nor do we take such great pleasure in our friends' own enjoyment of their children.[566]

Different types of relationship render different types of love, none of which, we have found, may be positively excluded from a Personalist model of Divine-human relationships.

V.03) Eros: Romantic Love

Much has already been said about the strength of romantic love as a model for the Divine-human relationship. For now let us focus on some further negative analogies. Although all three loves are particular, romantic love is specifically focused on just one other person. God's love, though, is a love shared for all His creatures and particularly for His church. The universality of God's love does not abnegate its particularity. In his *Commentary on the Song of Songs* (3.189-90) Origen argues that there are different "orders" of love appropriate to the object of love, so that one may love two parties equally, but not similarly.[567] Origen gives scriptural examples to make his case. Thus, God loves the Egyptians and the Hebrews equally, but the Egyptians as part of His general love for creation and the Hebrews from a particular love. Again, God loves His People Israel but has a specific love for Moses. The negative analogy with the model of romantic love is not

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our sire or that His marriage with the Church is other than mystical. But if Friendship were used for this purpose we might mistake the symbol for the thing symbolised." ibid., pp.81-2.

[564] Solomon, *About Love*, p.322.

[565] ibid., p.318.

[566] "Can Parents and Children Be Friends?", p. 22.

[567] Catherine Osborne, *Eros Unveiled. Plato and the God of Love* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp.82, 168.

so much with the particularity of the nature of its love - as Origen makes clear, different kinds of love are compatible with God's universal love - but rather with the relation between *eros* and sexuality.

Anders Nygren in his classic study of love, *Agape and Eros*, maintained that the Christian concept of *agape* was quite distinct from concepts of love in cultures contemporary or prior to it. One of his arguments was that the concept of *eros* had no place in the Christian account of love, being an acquisitive love, and that those Patristic thinkers who employed the term brought about a distorting synthesis of Hellenistic and Christian ideas.[568] Others have challenged Nygren's general thesis,[569] and his narrow definition of *eros* as selfish and acquisitive.[570] My concern is to examine whether *eros* is really an appropriate concept with which to describe the Divine-human relationship, given its associations with sexuality, desire, attraction and beauty. It is certainly plausible to predicate a desire on the part of humans for the Divine, whether it be natural or a gift of grace is not our present concern. Although God is incorporeal it is still reasonable to predicate the much neglected attribute of beauty to God,[571] that He meets our essential needs and that faith in Him promises eternal life. It is more difficult to talk of Divine desire or attraction for the human. Nygren was suspicious of positing acquisitive *eros* to God for that would be to presume that there was a lack or need in God, when traditional theology has maintained that God's love for the world is an overflowing love. If we are to have a broader understanding of *eros* than Nygren's and are not to posit a detached God who remains apathetic to His creatures, then one may suppose that God desires and takes delight in creatures who live in right relationship with Him. This is not an appetitive need, but superabundant to God's being. As Catherine Osborne writes:

> There obviously are certain things that God obtains from no other source; he cannot obtain the worship of human beings unless they perform it..... Hence if we are to attribute any love or concern for humanity to God it had better be an interest that appreciates what is good in human works, and is hurt by what is bad or undesirable.[572]

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[568] Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*. trans. P.S. Watson (London, SPCK, [1930] 1954), Part II, ch.6.

[569] See Osborne, p.5.

[570] J.M. Rist, *Eros and Psyche: Studies in Plato, Plotinus and Origen*. (Toronto: Phoenix suppl. vol.6, 1964) challenges a purely appetitive reading of *eros* in the Platonic tradition.

[571] See Psalm27.10; 90.17. Patrick Sherry, *Spirit and Beauty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992) and James Alfred Martin, *Beauty and Holiness* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[572] Osborne, p.65. She adds later, "We are hardly in a position to provide for the essential needs of God; what we offer is more a token of affection, as one might give someone a rose, not because she needs a rose but as a

This form of *eros* involves both non-appetitive desire and the ability to be other-regarding.[573] The ontological asymmetry between God and His creatures, in the fallen state exacerbated by sin, rules out the possibility that God's desires towards His creatures could ever be for a superior quality. Indeed, God's love for the fallen is a generous love for the unlovable and for the redeemed, a love which Osborne considers to originate in a form of Divine self-love: "If God finds humanity lovely, then, it will be his own loveliness, the loveliness of his own beloved Son, that he finds there."[574]

Osborne's general thesis is that, contrary to Nygren and also C.S. Lewis, one should not always understand love in terms of a motivational analysis of desires and benefits. She argues that the Classical myth of Cupid proposes "a kind of explanation of why someone loves; one loves because one is wounded with the arrow sent by the god of love."[575] This conception of love as unmotivated devotion, she holds, is to be found in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa.[576] As *eros* on this model is not essentially caused by properties possessed by the beloved the focus of desire is not so much on property-dependent beauty, but a willingness to "see beauty created and brought to perfection in the beloved."[577] On this model desire and appreciation of the beloved originate from love, and are not the cause of it. God loves the unlovable and even those who cannot respond to his gift of love. Osborne observes:

> God's love for the world may be a devotion not so much to the goodness and beauty that the world already possesses as to the realization of his vision of what it might be. It reflects God's attitude towards the world he created, not some feature of the world that evokes that response.[578]

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mark of one's own interest in her; doubtless it is important that she *likes* roses. In the same way we must believe that God will value our service and miss it if it is neglected." ibid., p.67.

[573] Actually C.S. Lewis was well aware of the self-giving nature of *eros*: "In one high bound it [eros] has overleaped the massive wall of our selfhood; it has made appetite itself altruistic, tossed personal happiness aside as triviality and planted the interests of another in the centre of our being." Lewis, pp.104-5.

[574] Osborne, pp.11-12.

[575] ibid., p.73.

[576] Special attention is paid to Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* ("Hence it is of no consequence whether God is said to be the object of *eros* or *agape*, nor do I think one could be blamed if one were to call God *Eros* just as John called him *Agape*"[Prologue, 71]) and Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs* ("For heightened *agape* is called *eros*"[Sc.13]).

[577] Osborne, p.22.

[578] ibid., p.23.

God, one may hasten to say, on this model is the sufficient cause of love, not the one wounded by love: "We are to love because he is love and the inspiration for love."[579]

Two concluding comments must be made in regard to Osborne's arguments. First, Osborne's position does not permit the return of the Divine Fiat view, just because the arrows of *eros* affect without consent. The model of *metamorphosis* argued for in the previous chapter held that God's personal presence was an affecting presence. It might be countered that Osborne considers love to be inexplicable in terms of motives, so the idea of consent is redundant. If God is love, and given the nature of God as a self-sufficient being, God's love may indeed be unconditional. In the human case, it is certainly not. Although we may not undergo a process of rational deliberation prior to falling in love, we may be expected to give reasons, if not sufficient reasons, as to why we love this person. These reasons are dependent on prior inclinations that are part of our personality. Insofar as a person is self-reflective and in Franfurt's sense possesses freedom of will, he has chosen to identify himself with such preferences; they are not just arbitrarily held.

Moreover, the emotion or attitude of love is fickle; one may easily fall out of love. Continuing commitment or separation require deliberation and consent.[580] Osborne claims that a person may love equally but have different kinds of love. We are entitled to ask why a person has this *kind* of love for X rather than Y. Secondly, it is difficult to see what maintains the distinctiveness of the concept of *eros*, now that it is stripped of reference to sexuality and desire, apart from its being caused by an affecting God ("the arrows"). Does this do justice to the ecstatic quality of *eros*, upon which the bridal mystics draw, or its involvement in sexuality and desire? Clearly the sexual nature of *eros* does not transfer univocally to Divine-human relations, although the intensity, comprehensiveness and ecstatic quality of love expressed sexually is precisely why romantic love has been used as a metaphor by so many in the Christian tradition.

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[579] ibid., p.74.

[580] It is doubtful that Osborne really has considered well enough the case of the "properties view" of love, that we do love for reasons. See Simon Keller, "How do I love thee? Let me count the properties," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 37 (2000), pp.163- 173; Neil Delaney, "Romantic Love and Loving Commitment," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol.33 (1996), pp.338-340.

VI.) Conclusion.

Each different type of Personalist model, whether it be romantic love, friendship or the parent-child relationship, has both negative analogies with the Divine-human relationship and complementing features. In as much as we recognise that their epistemological status is as models and not univocal statements,[581] the interweaving and complementarity of these Personalist models ought to point to the greater reality beyond, which one is attempting to describe. Such complementarity may even be seen to have its roots in the doctrine of the Trinity, as long as we see that God is the ground of all love not the mere receptacle of projections of human loves. After all, the terms "father," "son," "friend" and "lover," although they may have more than one meaning, are all predicated, in part, analogically of the Divine *hypostaseis* of the Trinity. The Father as the eternal begetter of the Son fulfils the analogous parental role, [582] whereas the incarnate Son is described biblically in filial terms as and as "friend" and "Bridegroom"(lover). The Spirit as "another *parakletos*," ensures the continuity of such fellowship and intimacy. Such a trinitarian solution has to remain within the limits of the principle, *opera sacrosanctae Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*. The unity of the Divine being means that insofar as the Father abides in the Son's actions, one might say analogously that a believer's relation to the Son as "friend" or "lover" is also a relation to a "parent".

The romantic love in its fullest form, because of its duration, element of consent, and intimacy, can embody the highest degree of interpersonal human reciprocal identification, or 'life sharing.' As Solomon commented: "Love is the concentration and the intensive focus of mutual definition on a single individual, subjecting virtually every personal aspect of one's self to this process."[583] As the reciprocal identification or *perichoresis* of God and the believer is that of an ever growing likeness to Christ, we require a model which does justice to the defining quality of our relationship to God as regards our identity. In addition, the romantic model, in contrast to the parental model, emphasises the involvement of our human agency in responding to the Divine initiative, and captures the relative autonomy granted creatures. Whereas parents and children move apart to lead

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[581] As C.S. Lewis writes of the *eros*, *storge* and *philia*: "there is a real nearness to God (by Resemblance); but not, therefore and necessarily, a nearness of Approach." Lewis, p.101. It is the *resemblances* which are used above as models or metaphors, not as direct descriptions.

[582] The term "Father" predicated to the first person of the trinity has not only an analogical component, but is primarily a proper name.

independent lives, lovers come together, and it is this communion which is the Divine intent for His relationships with humankind. For these reasons, the romantic love model will be taken to be the primary model, but also complementary model to other Personalist models which may be presented.

In this Chapter the Personalist model proposed has been defended against a series of negative analogies which claim to undermine its explanatory potential. It has been seen to offer a response to each criticism, and insofar as minor negative analogies remain it may be held that this is to be expected, given the epistemological status of models, which by their very nature can never produce a perfect explanatory fit. Within the umbrella of the Personalist model proposed, different types of interpersonal relationships - parent-child, friendship and romantic love - offer complementary models of the Divine-human relationship. If a primary model is to be selected from them, then romantic love, in its paradigmatic form, offers the most intense mode of life-sharing, and hence the best analogy with the eschatological call of the Spirit to enter into full relationship with God in exchange and ecstatic love.

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[583] Solomon, *About Love*, p.197.

CHAPTER 5.

METAMORPHOSIS AND A CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF FREEDOM AND AGENCY.

I.) Introduction.

Martin Luther in his *De Servo Arbitrio* writes: "our purpose is to investigate what free will is capable of, where it is passive and how it is related to grace."[584] This is our question too, to examine the relation of passivity and activity of the human in relation to the Divine initiative. In one sense our task is different from Luther's, for our focus is less on the soteriological primacy of the Divine initiative, that is accepted. Rather, the focus is upon how the Spirit in the Divine initiative affects human identity and freedom. This is a question which Luther would consider to trespass the hidden purposes of God.[585] It was proposed in the Prolegomena, contrary to the position of Luther,[586] that philosophical and theological analysis ought to be brought into interaction with one another. In this Chapter such a method will be applied by relating the philosophical concepts of freedom and personal identity, outlined earlier, to the demands of a theological account of freedom and identity. Some of the basic requirements of a Christian account of freedom and identity may be set out as follows.

1.) *The role of God in constituting human freedom.* As Creator God is the architect of the conditions of *formal* human freedom.[587] The relationship between God and His creature is

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[584] Luther, p.78.

[585] ibid., p.170.

[586] In his debate with Erasmus, Luther takes a quite anti-philosophical stance, insisting on the separation of philosophy and theology. Thus, when he calls human freedom a "fabrication" or an "illusion," he does so in comparison to God, who is perfectly free (it is a "divine name and is appropriate to no one except the divine majesty alone"), and to salvation, which is the result of grace not human works. At the same time, he recognises the psychology of human freedom, the intuition of free will, moral responsibility and our ability to choose between alternatives in our world (part of our dominion over nature that has been given by God): "We are discussing, not nature, but grace: we ask, not what we are on earth, but what we are in heaven before God." ibid., p.309. I am questioning whether such a separation is necessary. Part of how we are constituted in heaven before God will be in continuity with our earthly existence, and some plausible account needs to be given of what happens to the human person affected by the Divine initiative.

[587] To assert that God's status as Creator does justify subsequent soteriological *metamorphosis* of the human, as Paul sometimes does, would be to place the sovereignty and transcendence of God over and above the purpose of creation which is to be given in revelation. Udo Schnelle points this out in her account of Paul's anthropology. For example, in Rom. 9.19-21 Paul tackles the sceptical question of how God can hold sinners responsible if all is dependent on his will and humans cannot alter the shape of their destiny: "Paul meets this objection in verses 19-21 by holding the questioner's creatureliness before their eyes and thereby making clear the inappropriateness of their question. Whether consciously or unconsciously, the questioners are placing themselves on the same level with God, but they are God's creatures and therefore not at all justified

asymmetrical, a dynamic of dependence and freedom, creatureliness and personhood.[588] This rules out any false conception of human freedom as *causa sui*, absolutely self-determining. Hence, a Christian account of freedom seeks a conception of the Divine-human relationship not as two competing agents whose freedom is to be measured on one scale. The Divine-human relationship is not a zero sum game whereby the exercise of freedom for one party involves a restriction of freedom for the other. However, God's role as Creator does not in and of itself justify a Divine Fiat position, which bypasses created freedom (*formal* human freedom).[589] In addition, God may be said to constitute substantive human freedom by disclosing and enabling the conditions of the exercise of true human freedom, in the revelation of Jesus Christ,[590] and drawn to eschatological fulfilment by the Spirit.[591]

2.) *Christian faith liberates human action and bestows true freedom.* The biblical witness contrasts freedom with bondage or slavery.[592] The theme is most prevalent in Galatians and Romans. The believer has been freed from the yoke of the Law (Gal.5.1; Rom.7.6) by the death of Christ and the activity of the Spirit, and with that release comes also liberation from the power of sin and death (Rom. 6.18, 22; 8.2; I Cor. 15.26). The Christian is freed from fear of condemnation (Rom 8.1), and in place of the spirit of bondage s/he now enjoys the spirit of adoption, and lives as a free child of God (Rom.8.14-17; cf. Mtt. 17.26). In terms of positive freedom, the believer has been liberated *for* love (Gal.5.13) and *for* righteousness (Rom. 6.18). Freedom in Paul possesses a strong apocalyptic note, the nature of life in the future cosmic glory of God and true human destiny.[593]

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in accusing God. Here the apostle anchors anthropology in creation theology. For him the qualitative difference between Creator and creature is indissoluble and provides the positive basis for the sovereign activity of the Creator, who can choose and reject according to his will." U. Schnelle, *The Human Condition: anthropology in the teachings of Jesus, Paul and John*, trans. by O.L. Dean, Jr. (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1996), p.79.

[588] Anthony Hoekema calls the balance between ontological dependence and self-determination the "central mystery" of human beings. A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids/Exeter: W. B. Eerdmans/ Paternoster, 1986), p. 6-7.

[589] The human creature is granted in creation 'space' with which to pursue his/her own goals, and to have a relative degree of control or self-determination over their own lives (cf. Gal.6.7-8).

[590] John.8.36; Gal.5.1.

[591] II Cor.3.17.

[592] Exod. 21.2; Jer.34.9ff; I Cor.12.13, Gal.3.28; Rev. 13.6.

[593] See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle* (Pennsylvannia, Fortress Press: 1980), p.269ff. He summarises Paul's position on freedom in the following way: "'Freedom' has a threefold connotation. It denotes the past act of liberation from slavery to the powers of sin and the law; the present status of liberated believers in Christ in their joyful freedom and access to God; and the future eschatological horizon of the Christ-event as freedom from death and freedom in glory (Rom.8.21)." ibid., p.270. He goes on: "Freedom's negative aspect

3.) *The effect of sin on human freedom.* Without the Christ-event and the action of the Spirit, the human person is unable to overcome the effects of sin, which are universal, to be born into true freedom in Christ. The question of debate involves the *extent* of sin and its efficacy. This issue will be discussed in greater detail below.

In the light of our conclusions from Chapter 2, two extremes need to be avoided. On the one hand, an account which is so purely theological, as some Divine Fiat positions tend to be, that a plausible account of created freedom is bypassed on the move to redeemed freedom. Such an account would fail to do justice to our common intuitions concerning human freedom. On the other hand, a simple assertion of philosophical intuitions concerning freedom would disregard the remit of revelation and be in danger of falling into a form of Pelagianism. If we are to take seriously the role of God as creator in constituting our freedom and shun the fallacy that human freedom is *causa sui*, then it will be recognised that human freedom is experienced as an interrelationship between the voluntary and the involuntary, the active and the passive.

The philosophical analysis of freedom and identity outlined in the Prolegomena will be brought into interaction with the theological loci described above, by first examining an application by Eleonore Stump of Harry Frankfurt's hierarchical theory of the will to the subject matter of Christian sanctification. In doing so it is hoped that a more plausible account may be given of the psychology of Christian *metamorphosis*.

II.)The Hierarchy of the Will: Stump's Application of Frankfurt on Freedom.

According to Frankfurt's account of free will, one has free will if one wants to be moved by the motives that do in fact move one to action. Desires or wants are at the origin of human volition or willing. Frankfurt offers a hierarchical account of desires. "First-order desires" to will something (e.g. to want Bran Flakes), and "second-order desires" to have specific first-order desires (e.g. I want to eat healthy food). Although, an action may only be based on first-order desires, Frankfurt considers the capacity to form second-order

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is inherent in the defeat of the powers, that is, in our freedom from the power structures of the old age through the intervention of God's act in Christ. And freedom's 'affirmation' stresses our present status in Christ that frees us to serve our neighbor in love and makes us sigh for the freedom of creation from death in the coming glory of God." ibid., p. 271.

desires to be constitutive of personhood. One possesses freedom of the will, on this schema, when one's first-order and second order desires are in conformity, the first-order volitions are sanctioned by second-order volitions.[594] For instance, I will to eat Bran Flakes, because I have a first-order desire to eat them, which is sanctioned by my higher level volition, originating from my second-order desire to eat healthy food and hence this cereal. On Frankfurt's account one may also differentiate between acting freely or freedom of action and freedom of will. Freedom of action refers to cases where the person does what he desires, there is no discord between first and second order desires, but whose volition is determined and not free. For example, a drug addict has a second-order desire to take drugs, but his volition is actually compelled by his chemical addiction. Even if he had a second-order desire to cease drug use, he could not act upon it.

Stump revises Frankfurt's account a little, which she contends does not give due place to the role of the intellect in decision-making. Following Aquinas on the relation of intellect, desire and will, she argues that an agent wills to do *x* not only because s/he desires to do it, but because the agent's intellect would hold *x* to be a good worth pursuing, even if the agent does not hold this at the time of the choice.

> Aquinas' view requires only that some chain of reasoning (even if invalid and irrational reasoning) representing *p* as the good to be pursued would figure in the agent's own explanation of his action.[595]

Stump's revision of the Frankfurt position is formulated in the following way:

> An agent has a second-order volition V2 to bring about some first-order volition V1 in himself only if the agent's intellect at the time of the willing represents V1, under some description, as the good to be pursued.[596]

What is of interest is that Stump goes on to apply this concept of freedom to the theological issue of sanctification and hardening of heart. However, there is no reason why

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[594] Eleonore Stump offers a useful revision of Frankfurt's thesis: "On this revision, when an agent wants to make a certain first-order desire his volition, then he has a second-order desire; and when this second-order desire is effective, that is, when he succeeds in making that first-order his volition, then he has a second-order volition." "Intellect, Will and the Principle of Alternate Possibilities" p.259. Stump wishes to posit higher and lower order volitions and desires, so that it explains, for example, the difference between a.) a 'willing' drug addict (first and second order volitions and desires in accord), b.) a conscience-stricken drug addict (s/he has a second-order desire not to take drugs, the desire is not effective and hence, does not become a volition which results in a first-order volition not to take drugs), and c.) the addict who overcomes his addiction (unlike case b.) he possesses a second-order volition). For Stump's extended argument on this point see her, "Sanctification, Hardening of the Heart and Frankfurt's Concept of Free Will", pp.399-402.

[595] "Sanctification, Hardening of Heart", p.400.

[596] ibid..

the account could not also apply to conversion and regeneration, and therefore have a direct application to the *generating question* of this thesis.

According to Stump, sanctification may be described as the process of freely orientating all one's desires towards God, of bringing about concord in the personality directed to God. Discord and lack of harmony of one's first and second order desires is slowly turned around by the grace of God. However, a human person could only be a morally responsible participant in the process of sanctification, if willing ever closer relationship with God was, at least in some sense, caused by an *intrinsic* principle within the human subject. Hence, for Stump, God can act graciously within the human personality to sanctify, only when the human person has a second-order desire which would be in accord with the Divine action.[597] Without Divine grace the human person suffers from *internal* discord between first and second order desires, and only if a higher -level of second order desire is in place does God intervene to change the rebellious first-order desire(s) and bring the personality into a state of harmony. Such an account holds together the efficacy of grace and human morality responsibility for the change, the need for Divine action and yet human consent stemming from a higher-order desire. From the previous explication one may infer that a person acted *freely*, when she does what she wants to do, even though this could not be called a typical case of human willing as the first-order volition is only brought in line due to the action of an "external" agent, God. In fact, Stump claims that God's changing human first-order desires "enhances" human freedom of will, because it allows the second-order desire to be effective, to be willed, and hence, for there to be concord of higher and lower order desires. When there is discord in the personality Stump wishes to hold that the person is not fully free, and volition is not fully the agent's own, for either the will is frozen, or it is hi-jacked by the impulses of first-order desires.[598] One could also add to Stump here and say that where concord within the personality leads to an enhancement of *qualitative* personal identity, one is no longer divided against oneself.[599]

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[597] J. Oman concurs with this caution about the efficacy of direct Divine intervention into the human personality. If the human person is not to be overridden, as in the Divine Fiat view, a "spiritual gift" will be of limited value unless it is appropriated by a person as a moral subject: "It might deliver us from desire, reinforce resolution, dispel the clouds of evil imagination, yet, if it remain mere gift not turned into humility towards God and service to His children, in no way forward in us the ends of religion." Oman, p.72.

[598] For more on this see Stump's discussion of J.M. Fischer in "Intellect, Will, and the Principle of Alternate Possibilities", pp.260-2.

[599] Stump says as much: "What Frankfurt's account of free will adds to Fischer's conditions for incompatibilist free will is the requirement that the agent care about what his will is, and in a way which

Such an account envisages typically a gradual, rather than sudden, *metamorphosis* of the person, precisely because the human personality cannot be bypassed. There must be a relevant second-order desire as an *intrinsic* principle to sanction Divine grace. Some may not have the required second-order desire in the first place or the strength of it may fluctuate.

> As Augustine tells the story, when he prayed to God to give him a will for sexual continence, he made the mental reservation 'But not yet.'....it is clear that, if God had given Augustine a will for sexual continence on that occasion in response to such a prayer, he would have been acting against Augustine's own second-order desires. The result would not have been to evoke or enhance Augustine's free will but to undermine it, because the consequent first-order volition for sexual continence would have been against Augustine's second-order desire to have continence 'but not yet.'[600]

Stump also claims that her solution addresses the question of moral responsibility:

> In being sanctified, the agent does not become God's puppet, a simple adjunct to God's will; on the contrary, in sanctifying him, God is helping that agent to have the will the agent himself wants to have. The consequent moral goodness has its origin in the agent's own volitions, not just in God's, as the objection to the doctrine of sanctification had supposed.[601]

At the same time she claims the position avoids Pelagianism:

> Instead, this account holds that all the work resulting in moral improvement is done by God in response to the agent's recognition that he needs God's help and is willing to have it.....It is true that, on this account of sanctification, an act of free will on the agent's part is necessary for God's work of sanctification, but such a view was also held by Augustine and Aquinas, who are scarcely noted for their adherence to Pelagianism.[602]

We have an account, then, which goes some way to meeting three of the requirements outlined above for a Christian conception of freedom. As God brings about the concordance of first and second-order desires, one can say that there is a sense in which God constitutes true freedom (requirement [1.]) and liberates human action (requirement [2]). Stump's account also involves an interaction between philosophy and theology, and by involving itself in the philosophy of mind, presents an account which has a certain degree of psychological plausibility. We appear to have a *via media* between the Divine

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doesn't produce pyschological discord in him." "Intellect, Will, and the Principle of Alternate Possibilities", pp. 265-6.

[600] "Sanctification, Hardening of Heart," p. 413.

[601] ibid., pp.413-14.

Fiat view and Pelagianism, which posits a role for the Divine as constituting freedom and liberating human action, while still ensuring that human willing is moved in part by an intrinsic principle within the person. However, certain concerns with Stump's account remain.

II.01) Criticisms of Stump.

To begin with, Stump's account applies to sanctification not to conversion and regeneration. As such Stump's account does not capture the importance of the Divine initiative in effecting the relationship between the Divine and human. In her articles on freedom to date, Stump fails to address the relationship of grace and freedom head on. Thus, in her discussion of Aquinas, although she notes the integral association of his conception of grace and freedom, she decides to deal with only the question of freedom on the grounds that: "According to Aquinas himself, his account of grace should not alter the conclusions we reach about his theory of the nature of the will, independently considered."[603] As an exposition of Aquinas, this is far too convenient, and hides the tension which Aquinas' account of the relation of freedom and grace might bring to her position.

It may be justified to argue that this tension is in fact already extant in Thomas' position. On the one hand, Aquinas states that God only moves the person as prime mover, that is in general concurrence,[604] and otherwise, anything that moves the will as an "extrinsic principle" "*without the concurrence*" of the person, commits an act of "violence" against that person.[605] Yet he also thinks that there are exceptions to the rule that God only moves a person as prime mover: "sometimes God moves some specially to the willing of something determinate, which is good; as in the case of those He moves by grace, as we shall state later on."[606] He supports this position later in his discussion of grace, arguing that preparation for grace which is divinely "moved" is required,[607] and then "infused grace," which falls under the category of operative grace, at conversion. Aquinas argues for the legitimacy of the Divine moving the will in grace by using an analogy with a sick

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[602] ibid., p.414.
[603] Stump, "Aquinas's Account of Freedom," p.5.
[604] ST 1a2ae.q.9.art.4.
[605] ibid..
[606] *Summa Theologiae* 1a2ae. q.9.art.6.

person: "In the same way, a sick man can of himself make some movements, yet he cannot be perfectly moved with the movement of one in health, unless by the help of medicine he be cured."[608]

However, Aquinas offers no explanation as to why his version of the principle of freedom from constraint (the moving of the will by an "extrinsic principle" does violence "without the concurrence of him that suffers violence") ought not to apply to God's action in moving the will to accept grace. On Stump's account this could only not constitute an act of violence against the will, if there was some "intrinsic principle," such as an ineffective higher order desire, which required Divine assistance to effect it. Just because God has the unique position as prime mover to move the will in general concurrence, it does not follow from that alone that the Divine may legitimately move the will towards particular ends, such as the acceptance of grace. We shall revisit this matter in Chapter 7.

According to Stump, freedom ensues from being moved by an intrinsic principle of the agent. Yet she never tells us whether God's agency is to be considered *intrinsic* or *extrinsic* to the human agent. From her work on sanctification she leads us to suppose that God's activity straddles the boundaries: it is *intrinsic* in that it can alter a first-order desire to bring about concord within the human personality, yet *extrinsic* in that an element needs to be retained, to wit a second-order desire, which originates from the human agent alone. In assuming that one can deal with the question of freedom in separation from the issue of grace, she is in danger of failing to embody the interaction of philosophy and theology which is our aim.

First, she fails to give a satisfactory account of the effects and extent of sin. Is the Spirit's work only confined to the transformation of first-order desires? Sin encompasses second-order desires as well, and not only in cases of the hardening of the heart. Jesus calls for repentance, a repentance (*metanoia*) which requires a change of mind and direction (*epistrepho* [turning]).[609] Paul says that believers must purify themselves "from every defilement of flesh [sarx] and spirit [pneuma]"(II Cor.7.1 cf. I Cor.5.5). Thus, the "but not

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[607] ibid., 1a2ae. q.112.art.2.
[608] ibid., 1a2ae. q.109.art.2.
[609] See Luke 5.32; Mark 1.15; and on *epistrepho*: Acts 3.19; Acts 26.18 ['from darkness into light']; 26.20

yet" of Augustine's desire for sexual continence, may be plausibly considered to be because of competing second-order desires, not just the lust of his first-order desire, and the sinful second-order desire gains ascendancy and is on this occasion efficacious. In this light, it is not just the case, universally, that people act on sinful desires, but also that they want to (second-order desires). Sin has effected their *hearts* (seat of human's 'think-feel-act' nature), the whole person *sarx*, *nous* and *pneuma*.

If there is discord between second-order desires, or degrees to which second-order desires are held, then this would appear to require the intervention of Divine grace at a higher level, or some sort of explanation as to how one removes the effects of sin at the higher-order level of one's desires. Yet Stump's undertaking to safeguard human freedom and moral responsibility was precisely based on the integrity of human second-order desires as constituting an intrinsic principle from which free action could flow, which allowed her to talk of an 'enhancement' of human freedom, rather than a 'take-over' of human freedom. If my criticism is at all valid, then it would not follow, from Stump's account, that the intervention of the Spirit would 'enhance' human freedom, because the Spirit's action would select one second-order desire rather than the alternative which had governed the person's behaviour. Some alternative explanation would have to be given as to *why* Divine grace so conceived *enhances* human freedom.[610]

Bennett Helm wishes to develop Frankfurt's account by employing the concept of "freedom of the heart."[611] Although Helm does not make this a mainstay of his argument, the concept clearly has theological roots, as we have seen.. In cases where someone wishes

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[610] Stump's position assumes that it is not only necessary that a person have the required second-order desire, but also have acted on this to ask God for his help. This seems to present an exception to her rule that one requires Divine assistance to act on a second-order desire, if it is made ineffective as a result of sinful first-order desires. Thus, Augustine is simply unable to will his desired sexual continence, and requires Divine assistance to end his enslavement. In the typical case of 'bondage to sin' the human being is unable to act on any contrary second-order desire to turn against sin, but Stump wants to hold on to the aberration of an instance where one may act on one's second-order desires, namely, in the case of asking God for assistance. Why should such an act of will not be affected by the same conflict of desires as in Augustine's case above? Stump has left it unclear as to the extent of the "bondage of sin". Is it the case that *all* human first-order desires conflict with second-order desires when it comes to willing what is truly good? Or, alternatively, is it the case that only *some* choices to will the truly good are effected by sinful first-order desires? This is a basic theological question regarding the extent of the fall or the efficacy of sin. It would be possible for Stump to retreat to the position that the required second-order desires were all that was necessary for the intervention of God, and that one did not explicitly have to act to ask for God's grace. This would still be in line with the idea that the Spirit *enhances* human freedom of will, because the Spirit would be enabling the second-order desire of a person to come to fruition.

to change what they want to care about, as opposed to changing what they desire and will, he argues that Frankfurt's conception of freedom of will is insufficient. The reason for this is that caring about something is more than an act of will, more than just a desire to will *x*, but is holistic, involving the emotions, as well as desires and deliberation. Emotions need to be taken into account.

> Emotions themselves are essentially intentional responses to things one cares about, and so having particular emotions seems to presuppose that there truly are things one cares about. Conversely, it seems that it does not make sense to say that one cares about something if one did not or would not respond emotionally no matter what when it is affected favorably or adversely, and so caring about something seems to presuppose having the capacity for emotions.[612]

This is in line with the Reformers' stress on the importance of the affections in the orientation of a person.[613] Augustine talks of the heart as the organ of reception of Divine grace, a *conceptaculum*.[614]

Emotions have, as Helm points out, a "projectible pattern of rationality": "for example, to care about some goal is not only to want it but also (other things being equal) to be afraid when its accomplishment is threatened, to be angry at those who impede one's progress, to be frustrated at repeated failures, etc."[615] Something one cares about is a suitable object of one's emotions, but it is also an object of one's desires, that is, "worth pursuing or avoiding."[616] The two are intertwined, as what is "worth pursuing or avoiding" is usually something which provokes an emotional response, and vice versa, emotions generate desires if the emotion is grounded in what one cares about. Helm defines the "heart" as the rational coherence between one's desires and emotions: "To care about something, then, one's emotional *and* desiderative responses to that thing must be by and large 'in synch';

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[611] B.W. Helm, "Freedom of the Heart," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly,* Vol.77 (1996), pp.71-87.
[612] ibid., p.76.
[613] For example, John Calvin talks of work of the Spirit in both illuminating the mind to the Word of God, but also transforms our hearts, being the inner seal of our hearts. J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* Vol.I, ed. by J.T. McNeill, trans. by F.L. Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press,MCMLX), Bk. III. ii. 8, 33, 36. He differentiates between *cerebrum* and *cor*, brain and heart: "we are called to knowledge of God: not that knowledge which, content with empty speculation, merely flits in the brain, but that which will be sound and fruitful if we duly perceive it, and if it takes root in the heart." ibid., Bk.I.v.9.
[614] "My heart, not my feet, brought me to Christ." Augustine, *Sermo* 129, 7, in, Jose Oroz Reta, "The Role of Divine Attraction," p.155.
[615] Helm, "Freedom of the Heart," p. 76.
[616] ibid., p.77.

failure to display this kind of coherence is..... a kind of irrationality."[617] A person is someone who is concerned about what s/he cares about and one has freedom of the heart, according to Helm, when "one is able successfully to control what one in fact cares about, what heart one in fact has."[618] This is to take the long term view of considering what one shall be, rather than the short-term perspective of attempting to change a particular action.

How according to Helm's account may one change what one cares about? Helm's answer is that one may do so not by a single effective volition in which higher and lower order desires are at one, as in Frankfurt-Stump thesis; rather it may be achieved only indirectly via the exercise of one's will to control one's behaviour.

> What is important now is that successful and consistent control of one's behavior over a period of time can result in the acquisition of new *habits* and consequently a change in the kinds of motives for action that are natural for one. This is important because it is by doing so that one can change one's emotional make-up and so where one's heart lies.[619]

Helm gives as an example of this method Pascal's counsel that the first step to believing in God is to behave as if one believes. One may equally cite as another philosophical example, Aristotle's contention in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that true altruism comes from a process of instituting altruistic habits which at first may be willed against the grain, so to speak, but later are willed as part of one's disposition. Desires express dispositions (*hexis*), and these can be educated by imitation and habit. The difference between simulation of habits and a genuine disposition is that the latter is the appropriate response to an object, stemming from genuinely held emotion and desire, not a passing desire to simulate.

> [I]f the habit one acquires through the exercise of one's will in simulating emotions when they are appropriate is one in which the mediating desire drops out, so that one is habitually motivated to act in the characteristic ways because such emotions are appropriate, then one is being motivated passively for the right reasons, and this is to have genuine emotions.[620]

Helm's account may be seen as a development, as opposed to a replacement of the Frankfurt account, by making room for the role of emotions and desires, and hence offering a reconciliation between the mind and the heart. We may provisionally conclude that Helm's position will contribute to our account aiding us in raising the concept of the

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[617] ibid..
[618] ibid., p.79.
[619] ibid., p.81.
[620] ibid., p.82.

heart to its true centrality in Christian anthropology. Secondly, it may be that his account of the redirection of one's heart by the adoption of new habits will be most applicable to the doctrine of sanctification, rather than that of conversion. Questions still remain in the wake of the Stump's thesis and Helm's theory of the heart. How may sin effect the freedom of the heart? How may conflicts of desires, emotions and intentions within the personality be overcome? Finally, what is the origin of the desire to change one's heart?

III.) Excursus: The Efficacy of Sin, the "Image of God" and the Concept of a Latent True Nature.'

As a way into the subject of sin, the Platonic account of the way that the will is constrained by evil is examined. This reveals, in some respects, a similar pattern to the Christian account of sin and redemption, drawing as it does on distinctions between: freedom and bondage, compulsion and determination, and the discovery and loss of identity. The work of one of Plato's Christian interpreters, Simone Weil, will be utilised to draw out the implications for and connections with Christian theology. The intention is to provide a bridge to link the doctrine of sin with Stump's theory analysed above.

One of the central ideas of Plato is his identification of the *asymmetry* between evil and good action. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato compares the soul to a chariot being pulled by two horses, one black ('evil') and one white ('goodness').[621] This is a clear image not only of an essential choice that confronts the human, but also a metaphor for the potentially divided self. For Plato the choice for evil is essentially self-deceiving, the object of wanting but not willing, which may only come from a position of knowledge of the Good.[622] The evil person in a state of self-deception cannot fully comprehend the path of virtue. An evil

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[621] Plato, *Phaedrus* (London, Penguin Classics, 1973), Letters VII and VIII, pp. 61-2. Interestingly Luther, from Augustine, employs the image of a horse and a rider, but unlike Plato the human self/soul is not the rider of the horses but either God or Satan: "So man's will is like a beast standing between two riders..... Nor may it choose to which rider it will run, or which it will seek; but the riders themselves fight to decide who shall have and hold it." Luther, pp.103-4. Luther's point here is that the human will is never in a neutral position, it is always determined by something, whether the *necessity* of sin, or determination by God. Thus, Gerhard Ebeling writes of Luther that, "the question of the *freedom* of the will is really the question of the *power* of the will." Ebeling, p. 120. Although, Plato and Weil wish to talk of necessity and bondage, both consider the possibility of a redemption which builds upon the fact that a person is never totally determined by evil.

[622] For a greater elucidation of Plato's position here found in the *Gorgias*, see Ilham Dilman, *Morality and the Inner Life: A Study in Plato's Gorgias* (London, Macmillan Press, 1979), pp. 31-49. Dilman writes elsewhere of the evil person: "He may be a 'wilful' person and may have organized and settled desires, but he

disposition impairs one's capacity to choose the good. The virtuous person, on the other hand, knows the temptations and pitfalls of moral evil from the trials of establishing virtue as his/her disposition of will, and so, in a sense, is free to will both evil and good.[623] Weil recasts this position using the language of egoism. The ego is not a synonym for the self or human subject, but a particular stance of the subject towards itself (an excessive sense of self-importance) and its relations to impulses and instincts. When a person chooses evil the ego has a tendency to quasi-automatically "expand."[624] Weil describes the energy of the 'I' as self-assertion, exhibited in the expansive will (*volonté*) of the ego in exertion, effort and the pursuit of ends (*finalté*). It is not an expansion which opens up to others. The ego remains self-centred, hence Luther's dictum concerning human evil: "*Homo in se incurvatus*." It is an expansion at the expense of others. This draws on Plato's conception of evil as essentially self-indulgent and self-gratificatory.

In contrast, Weil talks of the good only being accomplished by a "contraction" of the ego, a renunciation, to make room for grace. In the *Phaedo*, Plato talks of "the purification of the soul" and "dying to the self." One becomes subject to the Good, the standards of absolute value which do not find their origin in the self. This is only a yoke when morality is external to a person's will and not when it becomes an internal disposition, "part of a coherent pattern of life,"[625] or freedom of the heart. Far from this "contraction" representing the "incurvatus" of Luther, it is an opening to others. One of the chief characteristics of the good life is love, which is precisely being compassionate towards others, forgiving, trusting, being grateful and sharing. While evil constricts the freedom of others, by *expansion* of the ego, good action enhances both the freedom of oneself and

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has no will of his own for it to be said that he does what he wills." I. Dilman, *Free Will. An Historical Introduction*. (London, Routledge, 1999), p.55.

[623] The possession of the moral knowledge is not *episteme* understood as a set of beliefs or propositions, but, for Plato, virtue as a state of the soul, that is the Good has developed an internal relation to the will. This is similar to Bennett Helm's point about concerns becoming embedded in one's heart: the relation of beliefs, desires and emotions. Dilman describes Plato's conception of the love of the Good: "It is in that love that the good man is both at one with the good and knows goodness. The knowledge in question is not intellectual knowledge applied, and in that sense practical knowledge, but affective knowledge *lived* by the person who has it." *Free Will*, p.61. Dilman argues that it is because Aristotle operates with a different conception of moral knowledge, and does not recognise that moral knowledge is internally related to the will in Plato's philosophy, that Aristotle criticises Plato in the *Nicomachean Ethics* on the question of whether vices are voluntary and on the issue of the nature of weakness of will. ibid., pp.54 -67.

[624] "To harm a person is to receive something from him....We have gained in importance. We have expanded. We have filled the emptiness in ourselves by creating one in somebody else." Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.6.

[625] I. Dilman, *Morality and the Inner Life*, p.141.

others, because in the space which one has opened for the other,[626] new possibilities of choice present themselves.[627] For Weil true moral action is done for its own sake, not for the sake of intermediary ends generated by the self, not out of attraction but compulsion.

Another illuminating asymmetry which Weil makes between willing the good and doing evil, is that a person "falls" into evil becoming subject to "moral gravity,"[628] but "one does not fall into the good." The idea is that one becomes evil by yielding to temptations and affective inclinations, what Plato describes as self-indulgence, which pulls one down so that one becomes governed by the *natural necessity* of affective appetites. For Plato, evil action is involuntary, for such action stems from moral ignorance and consent to the cycle of natural necessity, what Augustine would later refer to as "the chain of habit."[629] The will becomes constrained by affective appetites, making the person passive. In one sense, the person has ceased to own his will, because the will has become internally constrained by the assertion of the ego and natural appetites. Weil uses the metaphor of "mechanical laws" to describe such constraint, as well as impersonal and deterministic language of "falling" and being subject to the "law of moral gravity." The result of evil action is a repetitive pattern of choice, what Weil describes as the "monotony of evil."[630]

> [A] man's disposition of will *keeps him from* turning towards the good and so moving towards it....So from the point of view of his will he cannot be said to be under any constraint. But from the standpoint of the good what he wills is itself the very thing which prevents him from responding to the demand of the good. From that standpoint, which is obviously not a morally neutral one, he can be described as unfree.[631]

According to both Plato and Weil, although there are levels of evil, which make virtuous action more difficult by degree, one is never irredeemably evil, nor exempt from responsibility.

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[626] Simone Weil calls this the "void." *Gravity and Grace*, p.10.

[627] One may take as an example of the 'contraction' and 'expansion' model the case of a person who acts out of revenge and one who does so from charity. In the case of revenge, the action always has a reference to the self: "He wants to return to this man the evil he has done to him, the agent, *for himself.*" Dilman, *Morality and the Inner Life*, p.159. In contrast, genuinely willing the good of the other is action without reference to the self: "Where one wants another person's good.....if one's desire is satisfied one will be pleased *for him.*" ibid..

[628] As she poignantly writes: "Those whom we call criminals are only tiles blown off a roof by the wind and falling at random. Their only fault is the initial choice by which they became those tiles." S. Weil, *On Science, Necessity and the Love of God*. trans. and ed. Richard Rhees (London, Oxford University Press, 1968), p.177.

[629] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. by Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), VIII, 5.

[630] Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.62.

Behind this all is the paradox close to that which Jesus expounds (Mtt.10:39), namely, he who grasps and desires to fill the self is empty ('expansion'), and she who restrains, who empties herself to that which comes from outside is full ('contraction'). Dilman explicates this point in relation to the Platonic tradition:

> [I]f it makes sense to talk of what a man wants in life he must have interests and care for things. This brings in his relation to activities and concerns that exist independently of him. A man who does not so relate himself, one who has no commitments and feels no responsibilities, is a man who has no way of life, nothing he can describe as what he wants. He will, of course, have various appetites and desires, and he may respond to promptings....But he has no rudder, and he can hardly find sustenance in these momentary satisfactions.....This is a life in which a man can develop no identity; one which is destructive of any identity he has. The more it destroys a man's identity, the more does the man become dependent on pleasure as a means of filling in the void left by its destruction.[632]

The extreme outcome is the despair of the drug addict, or the series of empty tomorrows of Macbeth, where one has lost freedom of the heart, freedom to care about what one's cares are.[633]

In contrast, one "does not fall into the good," according to Weil, because the good requires the active participation of the person in constraining the ego, through practice, discipline, self-restraint, affliction and self-awareness. This involves another conspicuous convergence of freedom and necessity. For Plato the restraint of the ego is accomplished via an attachment to the Good, thus one's actions become *morally necessary*, that is compelled by moral beliefs.[634] This is not the "natural necessity" into which Weil tells us one "falls," for having a virtuous disposition is neither a state of ignorance (one knows evil and rejects it), nor is it a compulsion which is externally related to the will. The virtuous

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[631] Dilman, *Morality and the Inner Life*, p.167.

[632] ibid., p. 143.

[633] Bennett Helm calls those who have lost the ability to be concerned with what they care about, "emotional wantons": "*Emotional wantons* are creatures like dogs and cats that have the capacity for emotions and desires and so genuinely do care about things in the world. But they do not - indeed cannot - care about what hearts they have and so can have no motivation to change their hearts." "Freedom of the Heart," p. 78.

[634] Dilman compares this to a practitioner of arithmetic for whom the rules of the discipline determine his practice, but who nonetheless is still free to choose to cheat. *Morality and the Inner Life*, p.139. The person with moral knowledge is compelled by the Good, and ultimately the Good has become a "state of the soul." Yet even here the person may still be free to do evil and to be tempted, but this would constitute a "lapse" of his moral character: "Such a man has not lost his knowledge; he has lost touch with the love of the good that is still in him." ibid., p.153.

person is in a state of what Plato calls "self-mastery," of "being moderate and in control of oneself and master of one's own passions and appetites."[635] As virtue is not ego-centrically motivated, for Plato, there is no "motive" for being good; goodness is its own reward.[636] Where Weil would diverge from Plato is on the question of "self-mastery," which for Plato is achievable by the self being internally related to the Good, whereas for Weil it requires Divine grace. She writes: "We possess nothing in the world, except the power to say 'I'. It is this that we should give to God: the only free act."[637]

The self-assertive energy of the ego is impotent, and not the source of energy which achieves human *metamorphosis*. It is only Divine grace which bestows upon us the "wings" to surmount moral *gravity*. This act of renunciation of the ego, the placing the "I" in the loving hands of God, requires attitudes of will or intention: obedience, service, patience, attention, openness. It is a "passivity" which "involves renouncing an attitude of seeking and tenacity, exemplified in the pursuit of goals, to make room for greater receptivity to the good."[638] It is not the passivity of internal constraint, like the person caught up in evil, but an *active* passivity which allows for the passivity of reception: "The purest motives appear as something *exterior*."[639] To receive and express truth takes work, while evil occurs almost effortlessly. In this sense, there is no bypassing the subject, no getting away from the internal involvement of the subject in her divinely-given orientation towards God.

In summary, according to Frankfurt's conception of freedom as a harmony between first and second-order desires, there is no distinction between the unrepentant evil doer and the virtuous person: "Each chooses and acts voluntarily *in his own lights* and *as the kind of person he is*."[640] However, as we have seen above, there is a fundamental asymmetry

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[635] Plato, *Gorgias* (London: Penguin Classic, 1973), p. 90.
[636] The virtuous person "knows what goodness is, he is acquainted with it, in his life and actions; but he has no awareness of his own goodness." Dilman, *Free Will*, p.57. Dilman also notes that whereas in doing evil one becomes dependent on pleasures or meeting some other need, good action does not require a relation of dependence or possessiveness: "For relation with the good is not a possessive relationship. When one's relationship becomes possessive its object ceases to be the good. Thus one who loves and serves the good cannot become dependent on it for what he gets out of it." *Morality and the Inner Life*, p.169.
[637] Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.23.
[638] Dilman, *Morality and the Inner Life*, p. 157.
[639] Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.40.
[640] Dilman, *Free Will*, p.55.

between the actions and freedom of the good and evil person.[641] The evil person may have voluntarily chosen evil, in Frankfurt's sense, but once chosen his will is caught up in the "mechanical laws" of the ego. He is ignorant of the ends of substantive freedom. The will does not possess a Pelagian permanent neutrality to choose between good and evil,[642] but is an integrated part of a person's intentionality and hence subject to the corruption of human choice. Frankfurt gives no account as to how the ends to which we exercise free will shape and direct the nature of our freedom. Although Plato and Weil hold that there is a sense in which evil actions are involuntary, hence supporting a "bondage of the will" type thesis, neither maintain that the human person is totally enslaved, or that there is a part of the soul which may not once re-activated be attracted to the good. For Weil, the way to loving the good may be a high summit to climb, one which is only achievable by grace. Yet, if the evil person wants "to overcome everything in himself which alienates him from the good, the very fact that he could think in these terms and have such a desire, would mean that he was facing in the right direction; and this alone, provided that he does not turn back, would guarantee that his thirst for the good would grow stronger, until finally the good entered his soul and transformed him."[643]

Let us turn to the issue of the efficacy and extent of sin in its biblical context. By birth the status of the human creature is to be separated from God in being ontologically, although not relationally, distinct.[644] This ontological distinction is the very basis of human freedom

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[641] R.C. Moberly is clear that freedom as willing and acting that which is in accord with one's self is not ultimately compatible with the will to do evil. As he writes: "Only true correspondence with the image of God is man's true nature, or can be the realization of his faculties in full." Moberly, p.225. He goes to say: "Freedom is self-identity with goodness. .... Freedom in a creature is correspondence with God's own self-identity with goodness." ibid., p. 226.

[642] Alistair McFadyen offers the following description and critique of Pelagius' conception of the will: "Pelagius suspends the will in perpetual neutrality in order to ensure that it may find and choose its own motives (to Pelagius, freedom) rather than be drawn into movement by forces of attraction greater than itself (to Pelagius, coercion). Hence he atomises will, separates it out from the person's structure of intentionality and motivational complex, as well as from determining aspects of her environment. Will, on this account, has no structure, no substance; it is pure, formal capacity..... But then it is hard to see it as a specific person's will; hard therefore to understand its choices or its actions as in any way of the person. For every choice made in the will's absolute freedom is ultimately disconnected from any motive, desire or intention of the person whose will it is. Will's freedom is attributed, in effect, to its arbitrariness, its incapacity to be reduced to anything to do with the person or her situation. And that is why Augustine was correct to deem this an account which renders willing unintelligible as an act of the person." A. McFadyen, *Bound to Sin* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), p.178.

[643] Dilman, *Morality and the Inner Life*, p .167.

[644] Etymologically, the Hebrew verb "to create," *br'*, also means to separate, and is illustrated in the Genesis creation narrative in the separating out of the components of creation (Gen.1.6-7, 9). Yet the separation involved in creation is a distinction within the bonds of relation, as in Genesis 2, where the bonds include the attachment between man and soil (v.7), man and woman (v.18, 23), God and humans (v.7; cf.1.26), and

and identity, for it provides creatures the space for relative autonomy. As Weil writes: "God allows me to exist outside himself. It is for me to refuse this authorization."[645] In the Hebrew creation narrative, what God creates is good, which is "to state that nothing is inherently evil... Evil, sin and satan....are intrusive into God's creation and are never original."[646] Human creatures echo this in being made in the 'image of God.' There is no original dualism of good and evil at creation (cf.I Cor. 11.7). Although humankind is created good, it is also inclined to do evil.[647] The serpent's discourse is immediately intelligible to man, evoking in him a favourable response. Sin is a kind of second nature in man (Jer.13.23). Yet in the Hebrew Bible *yetser ha-ra'* is not all-enslaving evil, but a permanent temptation. There is here no *servum arbitrium* or original sin in the sense of an inherited corrupt nature. In sum, humankind's position in his existence is an ambiguous one, equipped for the good, but also with an inclination to evil, stemming from the very created ontological distinction from God.

In the Synoptic Gospels the personal and communal challenge to repent given by Jesus and John the Baptist, is so direct and unqualified that it is most intuitively read as an appeal for a response from a free human agent, one capable of responding.[648] The choice is made stark: repent or perish.[649] The parables of Jesus told in the Synoptic Gospels also confront people with the stark choice: are you a sheep or a goat? In the case of the parable of the

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between humans and animals (v.19-20). Within this understanding sin leads to a separation without the bonds of relation, effacing the separations and bonds of the order of God's creation. Salvation involves re-creation, as exemplified by the Flood Re-creation narrative. This has brought D.J.A Clines to posit a "Creation-Uncreation-Re-creation" schema in Genesis 1-11. D.J.A. Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch* (1978), pp.61-78.

[645] Weil, *Gravity and Grace*, p.35.

[646] Victor P. Hamilton, "The Theology of Genesis," in *NIOTTE*, Vol.4, pp.672. This was supported by later mediaeval Scholasticism by an argument of the form: God is good in being and act; creation is an act of God; therefore, creation is essentially good. This was not to repudiate the reality of human sin, but it is still the goodness of God's creating and conserving which fundamentally determines creation. Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition, Vol.3: The Growth of Medieval Theology 600-1300* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1978), p.112ff.

[647] Gen.6.5 cf 4 Esd. 7.118; II Bar.40.42f.

[648] This reading is not shared by Calvin, for whom repentance is a consequence of faith or grace. Hence he re-writes the repentance formulas as, "Since the Kingdom of Heaven has come near, repent." He adds: "when we refer the origin of repentance to faith we do not imagine some space of time during which it brings it to birth; but we mean to show that a man cannot apply himself seriously to repentance without knowing himself to belong to God. But no one is truly persuaded that he belongs to God unless he has first recognised God's grace." Calvin, Vol.I, p. 594. In relation to my model, Calvin is right in a sense, for repentance cannot take place outside of some sort of relationship with God, prior to encountering the Divine initiative. Where one may disagree with Calvin is whether that relationship yet constitutes the faith relationship, but is something rather less thematic, stumbling towards making the commitment to the Divine. There is room to respond to the call for repentance either affirmatively or negatively.

[649] Lk 13.3, 5; 16.23, 28, 30.

Prodigal Son (Luke 15.11-31), the lost son only repents when he recalls his former relation with his father. However, he "came to his senses" on his own, provoked by the consequences of his actions. He comes to his father out of desperate need, tentatively aware of his sin, but unaware of the goodness of his father. It is only when he meets his father that the unexpected, unearned, unconditional, act of grace, "filled with compassion," occurs which restores the relationship.

In Paul we have a conception of the enslaving power of sin, not only of sin as a result of voluntary action, Romans 1, but of sin as a force or power whose grip we cannot escape. Only a greater power, the power of being in Christ and the Spirit can overcome it.[650] If we are to take seriously Paul's claims concerning the vitiation of sin, then, following Stump, we can conceive of conflict between second-order desires between good and evil, or even the possibility of there being no good second-order desires. E.P. Sanders has difficulties with Paul's position here. He questions how Paul's view of sin as a power strong enough to wrest the Law from God's control and to render humans powerless to do what is good (Rom.7:11, 19), may be reconciled with the Jewish position outlined above, that God has created the world good. The main argument in Paul for this view is to be found from Romans 1-3.9:

> The conclusion in 3.9 does not correspond to what leads up to it in any respect: the charges of in chaps. 1-2 overstate the case and the conclusion is contradicted by 2.13-14. What this means is that Paul's conclusion, that all are under Sin, was not derived from the line of observation and reasoning he had presented in the previous chapter.....Adam's sin does not - in Paul's own statement of it - prove that all humanity is sinful and stands condemned. The heinous sins of some Greeks and Jews do not - even in Paul's own presentation of them - lead to the view that all humans are under Sin. This means that he held the conclusion as a fixed view and tried to bring forward arguments in favor of it, though without logical success.[651]

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[650] John Ziesler writes:"[Paul's] diagnosis of the human condition is more pessimistic than that of his contemporaries, who believed that all sinners could repent, be forgiven and then by following the Torah lead righteous lives if they really wanted to. Paul believes they cannot. All are trapped and controlled by the power of sin whether they like it or not. Repentance and forgivenness are therefore not enough: what is needed is liberation by a superior force. Sin is slavery, although it begins by consent." Ziesler, p.76.

[651] E.P. Sanders, "Sin, Sinners (NT)," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 6., ed. by D.N. Freedman (New York, Doubleday, 1992), p.45. Sanders explains why Paul felt it necessary to come up with such an argument: he "deduced the plight from the solution". Sanders goes on: "Once he accepted it as revelation that God intended to save the entire world by faith in his Son, he naturally had to think that the entire world needed saving, and thus that it was wholly bound over to Sin. His soteriology is more consistent and straightforward than his conceptions of the human plight, and thus may show that in describing sin he had to go in search of arguments which led up to a preformed conclusion. This explanation gives a good account of why Romans 1-2 and 5 are weak as reasoned arguments but lead to a definite conclusion. The conclusion that

The contrary evidence which Paul in fact cites, in Romans 2.13-14, is that some gentiles despite their lack of access to the Law, nonetheless "do by nature what the Law requires," and will be justified by their works in the judgement.

Although we may accept Sander's caution about a conception of sin as an all-encompassing enslaving power, nevertheless we have already found extra-biblical grounds, in the philosophy of Plato via Weil, to support Paul's position that evil does constrain the will and ultimately divests one of freedom of the heart. Sander's analysis provides grounds for maintaining that, what Luther calls "bondage of the will"(*de servo arbitrio*), does not leave humanity in an irredeemable position, unable to respond to the Divine initiative.[652] The human plight seems to fall somewhere in between the two

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all need to be saved through Christ, to repeat, came by revelation, and so could not be questioned; the arguments in favor of universal bondage to sin are then seen as efforts at rationalization." ibid.., cf. E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (London, SCM, 1977), pp.442-47; 474-75. Later Sanders comments further that Paul works with two principles in conjunction: "the one God is the God of Hebrew Scripture, the one who created the world, who called Abraham and who gave the Law; and the same God always intended to save the world by faith in Christ. Thinking backward from the second point, he had to conclude that Creation, Election, and the Law did not save. In his black-and-white world, if they did not save, they did not even help; election and the Law were not stepping-stones to salvation in Christ." ibid., p.46.

[652] Luther takes a much more severe reading of Paul and argues for the universal sinfulness of humanity which rules out all "free choice" as regards human response to the Divine. In his treatise he distinguishes between the "*necessity* of immutability" and "compulsion." He maintains that compulsion is contrary to a person's own willing. However, Luther regards the will to be necessarily determined one way or the other in relation to good or evil, either by God or Satan, and so it cannot ever be self-determining. Luther explains that a person's determination of will may change in the following ways: "If they abandon their quest of it, they only do so under pressure [force] or because of some counter-attraction, never freely - whereas, when their hearts are not thus engaged, they spare their labour, and let events take their course." Luther, p. 103. Luther goes on to say that in the case of Christian conversion a person is not compelled by God: "when God works in us, the will is changed under the sweet influence of the Spirit of God. Once more it desires and acts, not of compulsion, but of its own desires and spontaneous inclination." ibid.. This rules out one option, leaving us with transformation by attraction or simple passivity. He writes that a person's will, "would not... chafe were it being changed, and were it yielding to constraint willingly." ibid., p.102. Yet what is it to "willingly submit" to something here? If the will is necessarily determined one way or the other by God or Satan, then of course one "willingly submits" as one has no alternative. To presume that one could "willingly submit" either presupposes that one has some ability to respond to the Divine or Satanic initiative which seeks to determine one, or that once one is so determined by the new power one is somehow able to welcome it. However, Luther rules out the first option, as he wishes to give no credence to the capacity of the human to choose the Divine by acceptance. The second option presupposes some capacity to recognise or willingly submit to the transformation which has overcome one. Yet, surely this presupposes the relative autonomy of the human subject who can step outside his current situation and see that the change has been a change for the better and hence to be welcomed. If the person is totally determined then it is meaningless to talk of this capacity of acceptance. Ebeling remarks that in Luther, "God's ominpotence does not destroy the human will altogether, but becomes the ultimate factor determining the human will in one direction or another, so permitting it to be the will in a concrete sense." *Luther*, p. 223. If God or Satan are only primary determining factors of the will, then it is still possible for there to be content in the human subject which allows and accepts the will to be changed one way or the other. Whether one is transformed by attraction or sheer passivity of the will, either way there has to be something in the person which is attracted, or is prepared to accept passivity.

extremes of absolute evil or goodness, which on the Platonic view are both governed by different forms of necessity, natural and moral. We are neither angels nor devils.[653] This is why both Plato and Weil hold that there is some residual intuition of the good which allows a person to respond to the Good/God. Thomas Aquinas argues that on a specific occasion we can withstand temptation and shun sinning by an exertion of our own will, which is consonant with the view that good action still falls under our scope in some limited way. However, sin is inevitable without a faithful relationship to God. We are not good of our own doing. Likewise, we can perform individual good deeds, but to build up the charity witnessed in the saints requires obedient relationship to God.[654]

Is this position in danger of simply resurrecting the Semi-Pelagian position which Luther so pungently critiques in *The Bondage of the Will*? Is Weil's stress on the inner work, which attending to the good requires, merely a veiled reworking of Erasmus' use of the Scholastic categories of *congruent* and *condign* merit? How may the position developed in this thesis respond? There is nothing about the human person which *merits* the Divine initiative of personal encounter with God, nor salvation. The question is rather one of receptivity, which Hans Urs Von Balthasar concurs with Weil in considering to be the true relation of creature to Creator. He uses the example of Mary to illustrate his thesis that receptivity is not pure passivity: "passivity correctly understood of a being already active in its receptivity, whose basic act consists in being able to receive."[655] Mary's receptivity is shaped by the Divine, but it is she who responds to God's mission of the sending of the Son in the affirmative, "I do" (*Jawort*). Her "watchful waiting" and "active readiness" are precisely an instantiation of Weil's concept of attention and openness. It is one that is not the surrender of "resignation," but an obedience effected by the human "will and cooperation." The Divine initiative is required to trigger a response from the person. At this stage the person is passive. Whether a person does respond to the Divine initiative depends upon what a person has become and whether the person desires and can identify with the call to change one's heart.

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[653] To be wholly under the power of sin would constitute a victory for the forces of evil, positing us as devils rather than human creatures. The Calvinist concept of "total depravity" does not refer to the fact that humans are in a state of absolute evil, but that sin vitiates human existence: there is no unalloyed good. Calvin, Vol.I, Bk. II.viii-xi.

[654] Aquinas, *De Veritate*, "On Free Choice," Article XIV; cf. *Summa Theologiae* 1a2ae.q109.art.2: "even in the state of corrupted nature it can, by virtue of its own natural endowments, perform some particular good."

[655] *The Glory of the Lord: A theological aesthetic*, Vol. 1, p.236 [in the German edition].

The connection with the Frankfurt-Stump analysis is evident: second-order desires to change what one cares about are integral to an account which gives due weight to the integrity of the human subject in the process of transformation. Yet even the formulation of an higher-order desire in response to the Divine initiative does not make one "active," in the sense of being able to exercise one's volition. According to Stump's analysis an effective volition can only be produced, on some occasions, through the Spirit's action in bringing about the conformity of higher and lower order desires. Possessing an higher-order desire to want to respond to the Divine initiative is hardly meritorious as it is only triggered through relation to the Divine. In and of itself it is ineffective and hence, does not constitute a good act. Luther can chastise Erasmus' position so mercilessly, precisely because merit was conceived as an action *independent* of God.[656] Luther argues that instead of addressing the problems of Pelagianism, Erasmus by lessening but not extinguishing the role of merit, merely moves them to a different level, and in the process worsens them.[657] However, this thesis re-directs the focus of the issue away from soteriology and the grace-merit debate, and onto the matter of the receptivity of the human to the Divine initiative and the identity of the person in the process of *metamorphosis*.

Justification for this approach may be gained from its correlation with the doctrine of the "image of God." The biblical witness seems to testify to the indelibility of the 'image of God'. Genesis 5:1 describes Adam post-Fall as being in the "likeness" of God, and continues that same metaphor in relation to Adam and his sons (verse 3). If Adam continues to be the 'image-bearer' of God, so too do his offspring. Genesis 9:6 condemns murder for the reason that the human person is made in the 'image of God'.[658] In the New

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[656] Congruent merit refers to the merit a person accrues by applying himself to spiritual matters, out of his own nature and will (*ex puris naturalibus*), prior to grace. Any subsequent gift of grace remains unconditional and not bound by merit. Condign merit pertains to the subsequent action of the grace-filled person, who is now able to act in a manner and towards ends previously ineligible to him. Such action does merit the reward of God, namely, further grace and eventually salvation.

[657] The result is the greater "hypocrisy" of: "valuing and seeking to purchase the grace of God at a much cheaper rate than the Pelagians....Now if there must be error, those who say that the grace of God is priced high, and account it dear and costly, err less shamefully and presumptuously than those who teach that its price is a tiny trifle, and account it cheap and contemptible." Luther, pp. 293-4.

[658] Psalm 8.5 has also often been seen to support this view. Anthony Hoekema writes: "Man, so says the inspired author of Psalm 8, was made only a little lower than God - a statement that strongly reminds us of the words of Genesis 1 about man's having been created in the image and likeness of God. Similarly echoing Genesis 1, verses 6-8 of the psalm affirm that God has given dominion over the works of the Creator's hands and has put all things under man's feet." Hoekema, p. 19.

Testament James 3:9 is often cited as evidence that human persons continue to bear the image.[659] For Paul the 'image of God' is principally associated with Christ, and the disciples' task is to gain the 'likeness' of Christ. The emphasis is on redemption and eschatology rather than creation, moving towards ever increasing conformity to Christ's likeness, a reality of the future not the past. The image requires "renewal,"[660] however, Paul does not support the view that no vestige of the "image" remains.

The biblical evidence on the subject of the 'image' supports a dual component conception of the 'image' as, (a.) continuing to be part of humankind post-Fall, but also, (b.) requiring radical renewal and re-direction for its fulfilment. Anthony Hoekema argues, following other theologians, for a distinction between, what he calls, the 'structural' and the 'functional' aspects of the 'image,' such that structure is at the basis of function, and yet a mere skeleton without it.[661] In the history of theology earlier theologians, such as Irenaeus and Aquinas, tended to define the 'image' in terms of a person's structural capacities, whereas recent theologians stress a functional view, the image found in the activity and relation of worshipping, loving and serving God. Both aspects are required. Hoekema defines the 'image' in the structural sense as, "the entire endowment of gifts and capacities that enable man to function as he should in his various relationships and callings."[662] This refers to such capacities which allow one to function *as* God's image,[663] such as: reason,

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[659] Hoekema again explains the verse: "Thus, the thrust of the Greek expression *kath homoiosin theou gegonotas* is this: human beings as here described have some time in the past been made according to the likeness of God *and are still bearers of that likeness. For this reason* it is inconsistent to praise God and curse men with the same tongue, since the human creatures whom we curse still bear the likeness of God. *For this reason* God is offended when we curse them." ibid., p.20

[660] See II Cor.3.18; Col.3.9-10; Eph.4.22-24. Hoekema comments on this point: "The image of God in this sense is not static but dynamic. It is the pattern according to which our lives are being renewed by the Holy Spirit, and the eschatological goal toward which we are moving. We should think of the image of God in this sense, therefore, not as a noun but as a verb: we no longer *image* God as we should; we are now being enabled by the Spirit to *image* God more and more adequately; some day we shall *image* God perfectly." ibid., p.28.

[661] Hoekma notes that:"Various terms have been used to describe these two aspects : broader and narrower (H. Bavinck, L. Berkhof), formal and material image (Brunner), substance and relationships (Hendrikus Berkhof), endowment and creativity (David Cairns)." ibid., pp. 69-70. On the distinction he writes: "One cannot function without a certain structure. An eagle, for example, propels itself through the air by flying - this is one of its functions. The eagle would be unable to fly, however, unless it had wings - one of its structure. Similarly, human beings were created to function in certain ways: to worship God, to love the neighbor, to rule over nature, and so on. But they cannot function in these ways unless they have been endowed by God with the structural capacities that enable them to do so. So structure and function are both involved when we think of man as the image of God." ibid., p.69.

[662] ibid., pp.70-1.

[663] Raymond C. Van Leeuwan makes a useful distinction between being *in* and *as* God's image: "since God has no form, humankind is not made *in* God's image, but rather *as* God's image; thus, humanity is his representative and agent here on earth. The expression 'likeness' guarantees that humans will be a faithful and

language, conscience, moral responsibility, decision-making, aesthetic sense, imagination and creativity.[664] The 'image' in the narrower functional sense, Hoekema defines as, "man's proper functioning in harmony with God's will for him"[665] - the direction of the use of the structural capacities and gifts. Post-Fall, it is argued, human persons lose the *functional* sense of the 'image' because of misdirection and misuse (forms of idolatry), but not the *structural* sense, although a human person's potential to be *as* God's image is distorted by sinful use. Hoekema comments:

> The loss of the image of God in the functional sense presupposes the retention of the image in the structural sense. To be a sinner one must be an image-bearer of God - one must be able to reason, to will, to make decisions; a dog, which does not possess the image of God, cannot sin. Man sins with God-imaging gifts.[666]

Hoekema is in conformity with Paul's emphasis that Christ is the true image of God (Col.1.15), because He discloses the true functional form and direction of the human creature.[667]

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adequate representative of God on earth." "Image, form," in *NIOTTE*, Vol.4, pp.644. Earlier he talks of one understanding of the image as seeing "humankind as God's counterpart (*Gegenüber Gottes*), so that a dialogical relation between God and humankind exist" ibid., p.644.

[664] Victor P. Hamilton points out in relation to traditional structural conceptions of the image that, "Its weakness is that focusing exclusively on intellectual capacities of humanity, it correspondingly devalues other aspects of human experience, such as emotion." "The Theology of Genesis," in *NIOTTE*, Vol. , p.672).

[665] ibid., p.72.

[666] ibid., p.85.

[667] Colin Gunton has long argued for a more relational conception of the 'image', one that is centred on the Christ-event as the content of the 'image'. Gunton wishes to argue that the 'image' is bestowed at creation, a creation which is not separate from redemption, and hence, although the 'image' is perfected, only finally eschatologically, through sharing in the redemption of Jesus Christ, there is a sense that insofar as a human being is an existent creature s/he is gifted a likeness to God: "It would seem to follow, then, that, as created, the image of God is in a sense something given, even though it can finally be perfected only eschatologically, and through redemption. That something given cannot be taken away, except by God, because it is part of what it is to be a created human being." Gunton, *The Triune Creator: a historical and systematic study* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), p. 204. But is existence a sufficient category to describe what is actually imaged in fallen humanity? Gunton's second major point is that the 'image' is to be defined *relationally*, following from the triune nature of God, "three persons in relation": "This is where Barth and Bonhoeffer are right: we are concerned with an analogy of relation rather than one of being.....To be a creature is to be in a particular kind of relation to the creator. That is what createdness means." ibid., pp.206-7. Being in the 'image' means being in relation ("likeness-in-relation"), first *vertically* with God as His creatures, and secondly, *horizontally* with one's fellow creatures and the rest of creation. However, the concept of the 'image of God' implies something which is imaged. The triune God might embody relationality, but to say from that basis alone that human creatures insofar as they are relational, image God, is relatively uninformative. What makes God God, is not that He embodies relationality, but that He embodies a specific form of relationality. If it is the Father-Son relationship which is to be the criteria of imaging, then this rules out the indelibility of the image in relation to fallen humanity. It also does away with the idea that humanity equipped at creation not so much with a capacity to reach God, but some ability to, in response to the Divine initiative, enter into a "dialogical relation" with God. As Rahner has maintained, the giving of the Word requires some ability of the hearers to at least begin to hear it. It is in this precondition of the very possibility of Revelation that the structural aspect of the image ought to be sought.

In the Prolegomena voluntary choice was defined as "one which is in accordance with the agent's true nature and his or her desires." Complementary to the concept of the "image of God," I wish now to introduce a conception of a *latent true nature* (LTN). A person's LTN, like the "image," is bestowed by God at the point of creation. Classically Aristotle in the *Physics* defines a nature (*phusis*) as the character of an item, which shapes and guides the behaviour of that item, giving it form.[668] Our created nature has the formal properties of the *structural* definition of the "image" given above, and it also possesses certain intuitions of a moral and rational kind.[669] The status of these created intuitions are good, but our nature also has the capacity to negate these intuitions - the tragedy of sinning with God-imaging gifts. In this sense, our nature is fundamentally incomplete or *latent*; it is both partially *actual* and *potential*, and it is *potential* because it is only fulfilled in relationship with the Divine.[670] It is distinct from that of the "image" because the concept is person-specific, it is also the nature of a *particular* human being. One may talk about the true nature of humanity, which is revealed in the God-man, and the *particular* nature which God calls a specific person to fulfil. The concept of one's LTN does not only focus on

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[668] Aristotle, *Physics*, Bk II.1. Aristotle deals with human nature in the *Politics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In those works Julia Annas detects two concepts of nature at work. First, what she calls "mere nature," which she defines as: "the basic material of human beings, which, so far from having its own reliable built-in goals, can be developed in quite opposite directions by habit and reason. Human beings start out with some tendencies and not others; but they develop morally not through nature, but through habit and reason and the ways that these get to work on the raw material provided by nature." Julia Annas, "Aristotle on Human Nature and Political Virtue," *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol XLIX, No.4 (1996), p.734. Secondly, nature is defined, as in book 1 of the *Politics* as a goal or end: "what we say the nature of each thing is, is what it is when its coming-into-being is completed." Aristotle, *Politics*, 1252b32-33, quoted in Annas.

[669] Errol Harris provides an exposition of a Thomist account of a universal human nature in his, "Natural Law and Naturalism," *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol.23 (1983), pp. 115-124. He writes: "For rational beings have a notion or knowledge of Eternal Law, that is, they have a conception of the general scheme and order of things, and a natural inclination to act in accordance with it. In other words, they have a natural tendency to virtue, however much, Thomas says, it may be depraved by vicious dispositions (*habitus*) and corrupted by passions." E. Harris, p.122, cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II q.93, art.6.

[670] In this regard, the concept of LTN is in spirit with Aquinas' thesis: "*Gratia non destruit, sed supponit et perficit naturam.*" *Summa Theologiae*, Ia.I. 8,ad.2; cf. Pelikan, Vol.3, pp. 284-293. H.B. Veatch in explaining the Aristotelian concept of natural ends, uses the metaphor of the acorn: "All this is not to say that merely because the acorn is thus naturally oriented or ordered to its own proper and characteristic perfection, it must necessarily and inevitably attain that perfection. On the contrary, the acorn may fall on rocky ground and so not mature and develop properly.....At the same time, so far as the acorn itself is concerned, there is an entirely proper sense in which such happenings may be said to be bad for it, in that they prevent or impede it from attaining its natural perfection or end..... Indeed, following Aristotle's terminology, the good of the acorn is simply the attainment of its natural end or perfection...." H.B. Veatch, *Rational Man: A Modern Interpretation of Aristotelian Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), pp.51-52. In the Christian account it is the faith-relationship with the Divine which dictates whether the natural end is to be realised or not.

human capacities as such, but also on the *substantive* ends of reason, morality, aesthetics, which are God-directed. LTN is distorted and stunted out of relationship with the Divine. Its fruition is contingent not necessary. However, the fact that a human person's LTN may point to certain ends, does not mean that the end is already fully present. The content of the end of human nature is, as Christian revelation shows, something which requires disclosure.

Does this mean that there is 'ontological continuity' between God and human beings? This is certainly Colin Gunton's fear of certain *structural* conceptions of the "image of God":

> Here we must note that whatever the human likeness to God is, it does not appear to license the positing of any continuity between the human and the divine. The text's maintaining of a clear distinction between the creator and his creation, a distinction continued and reinforced by orthodox christology's ascription of divinity to Jesus Christ uniquely of the human race, rules out any intrinsic endowment or capacity which makes man in some sense inherently divine, whether by virtue of reason or any other similar character.[671]

However, the concept of a latent 'true nature' which I posit does not hold such 'ontological continuity.'[672] First, one can act against one's latent 'true nature,' the possibility of sin, and hence can obscure it. Secondly, one's latent 'true nature' is precisely that *latent*, and in order for it to become fulfilled it requires to be in relationship to God. Thus, it is not complete or static, and is not "already inherent in, or achieved by, the beginning."[673] Neither does it allow us to make the initiative towards God; we are not gods, and our susceptibility towards "moral *gravity*" displays this. As a result of God's covenant intention at creation, our creation is graced and consequently our destiny inherent in our graced nature. To be "inherent" in this sense, is neither to posit 'ontological continuity,' nor a conception of redemption as *anamnesis*. Rather it is to conceive of creation and redemption as a "project", to use Gunton's phrase, or a covenantal pilgrimage, in which the destiny may well be inherently sign-posted from the beginning, but only truly recognised and fulfilled in the Christ-event and human participation in the Spirit-led process of regeneration and sanctification.

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[671] Gunton, *Triune Creator*, pp.204-5.
[672] Neither need this be true of the Scholastic concept of the *homo capax Dei*, which is an openness or desire to ascend to the fulfilment of our nature in union with our creator.
[673] ibid., p. 201.

In overview, although Stump's account conceives of incidences of hardening of heart, the possibility of conflicts at the level of higher-order desires are not considered. The account of sin given above has attempted to provide a more realistic picture of the nature of human entanglement in evil. The vitiation of human existence by sin means that such conflict should be expected and the question of how the heart is transformed reconsidered. The survival of some sort of capacity or opportunity to thirst after the good provides the basis for a human response to the challenge of the Divine initiative. Such a capacity is linked with the created nature of human persons, who are granted a LTN that is fulfilled only in relationship with the Divine.

IV.) The Personalist Model: A Modified Version of Stump's Account.

If we are to modify and strengthen Stump's account we need to address the issue of how, given the entanglement of the heart in sin, the Divine initiative is able to provoke a response from an "intrinsic principle" within the person. For instance, how is the sinful second-order desire, represented by Augustine's "but not yet," to give way to his desire to repent and accept Christ? Is the intervention of Divine grace at the level of higher-order desires required? We are back to the question of how do people's hearts change, and what they care about most deeply.

It seems to be an empirical fact that aspects of people's personalities often do change, both for better and for worse. They change for a variety of reasons, among which one might plausibly suggest: the encounter of new people, the experience of particular events, and the undertaking of certain reflections and deliberations. The preparation for Augustine's conversion is quite lengthy and includes many of the above elements. For example, he had heard of the conversion of Victorinus, and from Porticianus about the life of St. Anthony, and he had undergone considerable intellectual inquiry into Christianity and personal reflection. Still his soul remained divided. The trigger occurred when he heard, in the garden in Milan, the voice of a boy repeating "*tolle lege*"(pick it up), and he suddenly acknowledged "the impossibility of healing the division in his soul by himself [that] he was at last open to a restoration and cure that would be effected by divine agency - by grace."[674] What we have here is a pattern which fits well into our proposals. It was not the

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[674] Colin Starnes, *Augustine's Conversion: A Guide to the Argument of Confessions I-IX*, (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1990), p. 235. Of course, Augustine's own understanding of the event was couched

case that Augustine himself resolved the tension amidst his second-order desires. He recognised that his own efforts were doomed. Rather it was simply the case that given his incapacity, he renounced his own efforts and accepted the reality of Christ, and the efficacy of the work of the Spirit. This was the beginning of a turning towards Christ, not an act, but an intention or desire which opened the door to the activity of the Spirit.

This does not answer the question of how the second-order desire to accept the reality of Christ is brought about. One might refer to the key events in the sequence of the narrative, just as a secular example of a change in someone's personality may refer to particular events, encounters and reflections in that person's life which prompted the change. However, a Christian account of *metamorphosis* must place God as the *initiator* of change, of the Divine-human relationship. The events and experiences which led up to Augustine's conversion may be said to mediate the personal presence of the Spirit. The Spirit, the *parakletos* is the "one who is called alongside."[675] As argued in Chapter 3, personal presence is affective, in challenging the person.

A person will not necessarily recognise the Spirit's presence, although they may recognise the Spirit's presence in their life retrospectively.[676] Rather the person may experience the effect of the Spirit's presence implicitly. It is mistaken to rigidly compartmentalise the Spirit-human relationship, as if the Spirit initiates and challenges explicitly at one point, and then leaves the person to make her response. It is also misguided to conceive of the encounter with the Spirit only when one hears the Word of God, at a particular spatio-temporal slice. The challenge of the Spirit is as persistent as God is ubiquitous. The activity of God is not something which enters existence at one point; it is that which sustains existence always. One may be ignorant of the Divine, reject Christ, but from cradle to grave one is never outside of some kind of relation to the Divine. Sanctification may be considered to be the processes of perceiving with greater clarity the value of the

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in his own philosophical terms. Starnes reconstruction is very Platonic: "Presented as a divine command, where he had either to obey or disobey, he could now choose definitively between his habits and his rational will since this order - which spoke only to his rational will - did not come from within and from what was merely a part of himself. It was a command he obeyed voluntarily....The whole threat and tyranny of his habitual desires had come from their independence from reason - but in the position to which he had been called, and which he had freely and consciously chosen, nature had no such independence since here, through divine grace, it was perfectly united with reason in Christ." ibid., pp. 235-6.

[675] Carson, p.499.

[676] This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 9 in relation to the question of discernment.

Divine presence, the object of one's will, and hence, a strengthening of one's willpower to conform to the image of God in Christ.[677]

The Spirit's affective presence will *activate* or *re-activate* a person's *latent true nature* (LTN), as long as that person's heart has not become so hardened by acting in such a way which negates one's LTN. The *re-activation* of the LTN does not make *potentiality* actual, the LTN is still latent waiting for fulfilment in relationship with God. This explains why Augustine's desire to call on God and repent wins out over his sinful desires, and why the Spirit may then be conceived to work in the manner in which Stump explicates as bringing about the harmony of higher and lower order desires. Stump's position was seen not to give a sufficient account of why the second-order desire to respond to God ever wins out, when the self is divided by sin, not only between higher and lower desires, but at the level of higher-order desire as well. In relation to this problem, we may conceive of the personal presence of the Spirit affecting the person in such a way that the desire to respond wins out. Alternatively, on a modified version of Stump's account, as long as a desire to call on God and repent is somewhere amidst Augustine's higher-order desires, the Spirit may legitimately work to make such a desire an effective volition and hence bring about a harmony of both between and within higher and lower order desires. Both options are plausible, but the first one bears more weight within the Personalist model presented and explains how one higher order desire may trump another within a person's mind, without positing extrinsic Divine intervention to alter mental states.

While the acceptance of the Spirit's activity in enabling a person to undergo Christian *metamorphosis* requires the shedding of the belief in the absolute self-determination of the self, in other ways it constitutes an empowering and reinforcing of the proper exercise of the will. Paul emphasises that freedom in the Spirit is freedom from fear, from fate and from the enslaving effects of sin. This may be linked with the psychological insight that strength of will, the ability to execute one's highest order desires and not to be bound by extrinsic factors, is partly dependent upon one's own perception of one's willpower and the

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[677] Mark S. Pestana makes the important point derived from both Plato and Aquinas that, "the more clearly one is aware of the worth of an object, the stronger will be the desire elicited by that apprehension.....the ability to do otherwise (than as prompted by contrary desires) is enhanced by clarified consciousness of the particular good at which one aims." Mark S. Pestana, "Second Order Desires and Strength of Will," *Modern Schoolman*, Vol.73 (1996), pp.179-180.

value one attaches to it. Those who feel themselves to be powerless, or who do not place a high value on being in control of their actions, tend to exhibit less strength of will when it comes to resisting sinful temptations. As M.S. Pestana writes: "The less sure one was of the worth of being in charge of one's self, the weaker would be the desire to be the one who gratifies one's own desires and the more satisfied one would be to have those desires gratified by factors outside of one's control."[678] The benign Christian paradox is that, through acceptance of one's dependence on God, one may begin to have the freedom to be confident that one is truly in charge of one's will.

In the literature, an analogy with the Divine-human relationship is given that supports this Personalist model. It is of a person who wishes to help a girl who has suffered child-abuse. Analogous to the bondage of evil and its involuntary nature, the girl cannot just instantaneously *decide* to trust one, as if that were in her control. She cannot so readily escape the bondage of past experience. It simply is not an option. Trust can only be won not by coercion, nor manipulation, but by drawing alongside the girl, gradually over a period of time. This gives her the opportunity to probe one's trustworthiness, and reassures her that one is reliable. In this case, personal *presence* and an attitude of love and compassion *enables* a person to do something which unaided was impossible for her on her own, and which opens up new possibilities, not least of which is an ability to face the future unbound by the past. This is analogous to the importance given in this thesis to the conception of a persuading, Divine personal presence, as the key to Christian *metamorphosis*. Of course, in the above scenario, some people will continue in their distrust, just as some reject God's offer, even though the very position of being able to accept or reject the offer is one which is enabled by the Divine initiative. The Pastoral theology of interpersonal relations may provide us with insights to re-apply to Systematics.

One last challenge to the proposed position should be examined. As has been noted, Luther conceives of the human person as being wholly passive in relation to salvation. It has been argued that on a Personalist account the Spirit's personal presence contingently affects the person, re-activating the LTN and hence triggering a response in the person. As

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[678] ibid., p.181. Pestana draws upon the work of the Jesuit introspectionist psychologists E. Boyd Barrett and Johann Lindworsky.

a rejoinder, it might be argued along Luther's lines,[679] that our affections are passively constituted: one does not choose what attracts one.[680] Things attract or affect us in particular ways, ways which liberate or possess us. Our attractions are ontologically ordered by what is external to us, in Luther's terms, either by God or by Satan. The human personality is not a closed system, the argument may go, and hence in re-ordering and conditioning the affections the Spirit does not intervene or invade a person's identity. One is never, as Luther remarks, unconditioned or undetermined.

In response one might point to recent work in the philosophy of mind that challenges the view that emotions are wholly passive. Emotions are usually intentional, they tend to be *about* something.[681] They also contain propositional attitudes: "I am angry at *x*" is the case because I have certain beliefs or attitudes about *x*. As we have seen in relation to Helm's discussion of the heart, emotions have a "projectible pattern." A person is not simply affected as in the Empiricist's model of perception by something impressing upon a blank sheet of paper or soft candle wax (resulting in an "idea" or "impression"). Beliefs and attitudes towards the state of affairs which constitute the *object* of an emotion are part of its causal condition, and the latter can be, to some extent, *actively* controlled by a person.[682] In this sense, it is not clear that emotions are simply involuntary or passively formed.

It is possible to reflect about a particular object, S, of an emotion, to reason about whether S really is the case and whether one's evaluation of S is appropriate, that is whether one's propositional attitudes about it are valid. In doing so one is able to alter the frequency and intensity that an emotion in reaction to S obtains, and even whether it occurs at all. One can actively shape one's disposition, which effects the way one reacts to states of affairs and hence what affects and attracts us. In this sense, one's dispositions towards having certain emotions may be considered for their appropriateness or "responsiveness to

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[679] Eilert Herms, *Luthers Auslegung des Dritten Artikels* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987); *Offenbarung und Glaube* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992).

[680] Robert W. Jenson commenting on Luther points out the importance of the verb *rapere* (to be rapt) in Luther's account of freedom: "when God 'enraptures us' he faces us by sharing with us his own freedom, his *liberum arbitrium*. Human freedom, in the only sense Luther wants to talk about, is nothing less than participation in God's own triune rapture of freedom." R.W. Jenson, "An Ontology of Freedom in the *De Servo Arbitrio* of Luther," *Modern Theology*, Vol.10, (1993), p.252.

[681] W. Lyons, *Emotion* (Cambridge, CUP, 1980).

reason."[683] One is active insofar as one may exercise self-control and self-understanding in relation to one's beliefs and emotions. One is purely passive when one lacks control, when one has no control or understanding concerning what affects one, where one's mental states are not responsive to reason. One may be a "wanton," to use Frankfurt's terminology, where all reason responsiveness is redundant, or one may have failed in self-control, knowing what is proportionate to reason, but being unable to alter one's mental dispositions and will.

This is not to say that at the point where the state of affairs, S, impinges upon one, one has the choice to have an emotion. Many emotions are, in this sense, non-voluntary. In the history of ideas emotions have been designated as passions, produced by reacting to a state of affairs external to the subject, over which we have limited control.[684] Choice is more appropriate to action than to emotion.[685] In certain respects these conclusions about the relation of passivity and activity in relation to emotion may be generalised to other aspects of human psychology. For instance, perception can no longer simply be considered as the visual impression of external objects on the mind, but as involving a "tacit activity of integration and interpretation of clues" received from the objects of perception.[686] Likewise we may say of beliefs that they are formed, rather than chosen or adopted, often

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[682] Robert M. Gordon, "The Passivity of the Emotions," *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. XCV (1986), pp. 371-392.

[683] The phrase is culled from Joseph Raz, "The Active and the Passive," *Aristotelian Society* (1997), Supp.71, pp.229-246. His argument is that the holding of beliefs are active only when they are "responsive to [what we think is] reason," which does not mean that beliefs are chosen after deliberation: "This responsiveness is manifested in two ways. First, in that unconscious processes of belief formation, just like explicit deliberation, depend on absence of awareness of reasons against the belief, and - normally - on reasons for it..... Second, when I deliberate and come to the view that the evidence is that a proposition that I believe is false the very process of coming to that conclusion is also a process of ceasing to believe it." Raz, p.218.

[684] Gordon offers the thought experiment of imagining a race of people who possessed "internalised controls" which can totally control one's emotional reactions to states of affairs once they have been activated. He comments, "embarrassment would remain, for them as for us, a way of being acted on, a passion. These people, when they are embarrassed, are embarrassed about something." Gordon, p.384. They can control their emotions, not the object which activates them. This is true even if the object is illusory, for the person believes the state of affairs, S, to obtain.

[685] Gordon argues persuasively that emotions do not involve the will in the way that actions do. Actions involve instrumental or means-end belief and deliberation about how to satisfy a desire and hence for intentionally X-ing. We may directly choose which desire to act upon and how to do so. The beliefs or attitudes that emotions involve relate to the object or content of the emotion that activates the emotion. ibid, p.386ff.. Joseph Raz concurs, preferring to talk of the passivity and activity of emotions and beliefs rather than their voluntariness. Raz, p.220.

[686] R.T. Allen, "Passivity and the Rationality of Emotion," *The Modern Schoolmen*, Vol.68, (1991), pp.323. Note that the "tacit activity" referred to does not equate to secret choice; most of our perceptual beliefs are acquired without conscious deliberation or an exercise of the will.

by subconscious processes, and are constrained by reason. At the same time they are actively held in that the subject's beliefs are reason-responsive and hence a person may exercise some degree of control over them.[687]

What this brief discussion questions is "the separation of a passive from an active and self-directing level of the self," and suggests that "there is no mere passivity or pure activity in human life, but that each necessarily involves the other."[688] In sum, a human subject is not simply passively determined. We do have a degree of control over what attracts and affects us, and hence, to conceive of the Spirit's action in conversion as an attraction or affection which overrides that control, as in the above objection, is to return to the problems raised by the Divine Fiat view. If the Spirit could affect or attract us in a way which overrides our internal dispositions, then the question is begged as to why everyone is not so affected. Luther was prepared to adopt an apophatic position on this issue,[689] but in the light of the argument above, one may question whether one needs to resort to such a strategy.

V.) Conclusion.

The Christian *metamorphosis* of conversion and regeneration conceived on a Personalist model, requires the Divine *initiative*, the personal, affecting presence of God, which encounters the human with a challenge to respond to the Gospel of salvation. The human response is not in the form of an assertion of merit, but an acceptance of the Divine presence, a renunciation of the self's claims to be absolutely self-determining. Merit is that which in a good action qualifies the doer for reward, but nothing which we do warrants the salvation that God bestows upon us. As Weil has shown, acceptance of Christ is not an act of self-assertion, but something which is passive, a surrendering of claims to be able to accomplish all by ourselves. The "inner work" of attention to the Divine follows on, rather than precedes, from the Divine initiative. To translate this point into the categories of Stump's thesis, to have the appropriate higher order desire, to *want to want* a relationship with the Divine, is not in fact to will anything. If anything comes of that second-order

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[687] J. Raz also posits a similar structure to the relation of activity/passivity involved in beliefs, emotions and desires, hence his claim that, "activity is related to the proper functioning of the processes which govern our mental lives, our beliefs, moods, emotions, desires." Raz, p.226.

[688] Allen, p.322. Allen while acknowledging that "we do no create ourselves or our world," talks of "an engaged receptivity, in Piaget's terms, an 'assimilation' of the world, which also requires, when we meet novel objects, an ***adaptation*** by us of the schemata and frameworks which we employ in assimilating it so that they can accommodate what otherwise they could not." ibid., p.324).

desire, if it is to be turned into an effective second-order volition, then Divine activity is required in bringing about harmony with competing second-order desires and lower order desires. Nonetheless, some inner disposition towards the Divine, which stems from an "intrinsic principle," is crucial in safeguarding human identity and responsibility.

Personal relationship with the Divine depends upon the *re-activation* of one's LTN, by the affecting Divine presence. As the Divine presence is a persisting presence, though not one ever to be taken for granted on our own terms, human life is lived from cradle to grave with the challenge to fulfil one's LTN through relationship with the Divine. Conversion is related to the disposition of one's LTN, whether it has been, through implicit or explicit rejection of the Divine presence, obscured and left stagnant, or allowed to remain lucid, open and attentive. It has been argued that sin vitiates the existence of the human person and has a propensity to bind the will, blind perception of the truth, and obscure one's LTN. Yet, alongside the permeation of sin, is the persisting presence of the Divine, which means that the power of sin is never absolutely controlling, unless the human person has consistently and over a lifetime accepted such a master.

Despite the human creatures' involvement in sin, as long as there is some higher order desire to accept the offer of Divine grace, there is an "*intrinsic* principle" which permits God to intervene to *turn around* human sinful desires, in such a way that *enables* or *enhances* human freedom, by *liberating* the good second-order desire. In relationship with the Divine, that is with the aid of Divine grace, the human creature moves towards the fulfilment of his LTN as called forth by God. In this process, sanctification is not accomplished overnight, precisely because, as Weil comments, it requires inner work, wanting to want the total *metamorphosis* of one's heart, which love of God requires and which the Spirit enables and perfects. In this process of sanctification the control of one's behaviour by attaching oneself to the new habits of the Christian life, centred in the liturgy and practice of the Church, will, through relationship with the Divine, alter the disposition of one's heart, bringing about coherence of emotions and desires.

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[689] Luther, IV, Sc.(x) - (xii).

CHAPTER 6.

A NON-PERSONAL MODEL: THE NEED FOR COMPLEMENTARITY?

One of the negative analogies that a Personalist model of the activity of the Spirit has to confront is the non-personal language used in the Bible, such as the images of fire, water, wind and breath (*ruach*).[690] The Spirit is first presented in Scripture not as the clearly distinct third *hypostasis* of the Trinity, but in Hebrew Scripture as "God in act,"[691] not even manifestly identical with God. John McIntyre points out:

> The Spirit is seen as acting, as noted,[692] with all the power and authority of God, yet God does not lose himself in the Spirit, nor is he identified, without remainder, with the Spirit. Nor is it quite enough to say that the Spirit is the *presence* of God in this occasion or that, almost as if the phrase, 'the Spirit of God' were no more than a periphrasis for 'God'. Such a suggestion does not do justice, either to the notion, recurrent in so many examples we have examined, of God sending the Spirit, or endowing someone with the Spirit, as with some quite unique gift. If terms are not pressed too literally, the Spirit, as we see matters at this stage, is God's *alter ego* going out of himself into the world to effect his will, or dwell with a person....[693]

The Spirit of God is synonymous with God's power and this link is continued in the scarce references to the Spirit in the Synoptic Gospels and the more frequent citations in Acts. In this light, David Brown has rightly pointed out that when it came to reflecting on the Spirit's trinitarian identity, it was not so much the Spirit's divinity which could be questioned, but "whether he[the Spirit] may legitimately be regarded as a separate person, indeed, more fundamentally, whether he may be conceived as personal at all."[694]

The term 'non-personal' refers to the opposite of what has been defined as 'personal,' namely, events or happenings not stemming from a centre of agency, non-intentional, and incapable of exchange with human persons. For instance, the events of Pentecost have,

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690 For a description of non-personal metaphors used of the Spirit see Moltmann, pp. 274-285.

691 Ernst Kasemann, "Geist und Geistgaben im Neue Testament", in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, vol. 2, ed. by H.F.von Campenhausen et al., 3rd edition (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1958), cols. 1272-78.

692 E.g. Judg. 6.36, 11, 29ff; I Sam 11.6; Ezek. 3.12, 14; I Kgs. 18.7.

693 McIntyre, p.34.

694 Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, p.159. McDonnell concurs with this view: "Possibly the impersonal category of 'power' used to designate the Spirit might have contributed to this difficulty [i.e. the obscurity which enveloped much of early pneumatology]. Athanasius held an almost completely non-personal view of the Spirit. Possibly taking his cue from Mark 8.38, Justin Martyr speaks of the Father, Son, and angels, and then refers to the Spirit almost as an afterthought." McDonnell, "The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit", p.144.

prima facie, a non-personal quality: 'a sound from heaven as of a rushing wind' and 'tongues of fire'(Acts 2.2-4). This is combined with the feeling of 'being filled with the Spirit,' which as in Hebrew Scripture empowers and endows.[695] Non-personal events or happenings may have personal effects, but that does not mean that their mode is a personal one. Neither is it a sufficient reply to maintain that these events are acts of a personal God, as the mode of operation is, *prima facie*, non-personal. If the mode of operation is non--personal, Vincent Brummer argues that, "The relationship therefore becomes impersonal in the sense that only one of the partners in the relationship is a personal agent. The other has become an object."[696]

One response to the presence of non-personal language in Scripture is to develop non-personal models of the Spirit's activity. Two such accounts by German theologians, Wolfhart Pannenberg and Michael Welker, shall be examined. Both develop pneumatologies which are based on an 'analogy' with the concept of a 'field' in theoretical physics. As Peter Hodgson notes, one motivation for developing non-personal models is contemporary science, such as the New Physics, where "*relations of energy* rather than bits of matter" are the dominant paradigm.[697] If non-personal models are not to be adopted, then some account needs to be given of why non-personal language is employed in the Bible and how it is compatible with a Personalist model (section IV). This raises the question as to whether non-personal models or metaphors are complementary to a Personalist model.

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[695] David Brown compares the disciples' experience of the Resurrection with the experience of Pentecost: "In one case we have visions of an exalted Lord whom the disciples had already known as the subject of personal experiences....that being so, both his separateness from the Father and his personhood were natural inferences to draw. In the other case we have, by contrast, an experience with no obvious personal marks about it; if anything at all was seen or heard, it was entirely impersonal....What could be more natural than that the object of the experience should be thought of as something that has taken control of them and as quite distinct from the very personal characteristics displayed by the object of their Resurrection experiences?.....the thing or power which they now encountered they had hitherto not experienced in any other form and its thing-like quality meant that there was no hint of possible conflict with the dictates of monotheism; moreover, an ascription of divinity must have seemed especially appropriate in view of the supernatural powers with which they now felt themselves endowed.....as well as perhaps the divine sense of well-being." Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, p.184.

[696] Brummer, *The Model of Love*, p.158.

I.) Pannenberg on Spirit and Field.

The theological methodology of Wolfhart Pannenberg is one which is refreshingly open to dialogue with science. In *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, Pannenberg states his method in the following way:"[T]he secular description is accepted as simply a provisional version of the objective reality, a version that needs to be expanded and deepened by showing that anthropological datum itself contains a further and theologically relevant dimension."[698] Philip Hefner considers that Pannenberg's approach recaptures the breadth of Aquinas' theology in attempting to relate God to all things. His theological engagement with science, "claims to add to our knowledge of empirical reality", and secondly, holds that "science is important as a realm within which theological issues arise and science can either lend credence to theological statements or falsify them."[699] My aim here is limited to indicating the background of Pannenberg's interest in science and why the use of scientific concepts in his theology appeal to him.

It is instructive to place Pannenberg's employment of the concept of "field" in its context of his relevant early work. He treats the Spirit in several early articles,[700] which draw primarily on the pneumatologies of Paul Tillich and especially Teilhard de Chardin. De Chardin's conception of the activity of the Spirit is couched in non-personal terms. He associates spirit and energy, which Pannenberg redirects towards field theory.[701] Both de Chardin and Tillich tend to blur the distinction between the human and Divine 'spirit.'[702] Rather like de Chardin's work, Pannenberg's doctrine of the Spirit is at this stage insufficiently integrated into Christian dogmatics, viz. reference to the Spirit of the

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[697] Peter Hodgson, *The Winds of the Spirit. A Constructive Christian Theology* (London, SCM Press, 1994), p.86.

[698] W. Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*. trans. by M.J. O'Connell (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985), pp.19-20.

[699] Philip Hefner, "Theology's Truth and Scientific Formulation". *Zygon*, Vol.23 (1988), p.135.

[700] W. Pannenberg, "Workings of the Spirit in the Creation and in the People of God," in *Spirit, Faith and Church*. eds. W. Pannenberg, A. Dulles, and C. Braaten (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), pp 13- 31; "The Doctrine of the Spirit and the Task of a Theology of Nature," *Theology*, Vol.75 (1972), pp. 8 - 21; E. Frank Tupper, *The Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973), p.237ff..

[701] Pannenberg relates the association to the concept of self-transcendence.: "Now, if it was correct to revise Teilhard's account of radial energy in terms of a fields of energy that shapes a process of evolution, then it makes sense also to maintain that this field of energy manifests itself in the self-transcendence of the living being, and thereby it even creates the lives of individuals" "The Doctrine of the Spirit", p.18.

[702] Paul W. Newman, "Humanity with Spirit," *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, Vol. 34 (1980), pp. 415 - 426. Notice the lack of distinction between the divine and human spirit in Pannenberg's discussion of ecstasis: "This ecstatic element of the life of the mind I call 'spirit'. It is at work in the ecstatic activity of all life, but only the human mind participates subjectively in the spirit since the mind is able to take his stand beyond himself to have his center outside himself." Pannenberg, "The Workings of the Spirit", p.119.

trinitarian God, the Spirit who mediates Christ.[703] The emphasis is too much on creation and eschatology,[704] the Spirit as the spirit of life, and not enough on redemption, the Spirit as Jesus' Spirit.[705] A little earlier Pannenberg in his collection of essays *Gottesgedanke und menscliche Freiheit* argues against modern atheism's turn to the subject, by posing the question of the "ultimate basis of subjectivity". The 'ultimate basis' is the faceless God of theism,[706] suggesting a separation of his conception of anthropology and freedom from Christian theology.[707] Thus, in both these early works, Pannenberg's theological conceptions take on a non-personal character, and they do so largely through not bringing into the fore Christian revelation of the triune God.

In his *Systematic Theology* Pannenberg goes some way to rectifying the above deficiencies by placing his ideas in a dogmatic context.[708] The specific question of religious epistemology is addressed, and the doctrine of revelation is brought to the foreground. With the entrance of the doctrine of revelation, the Trinity becomes the framework of the dogmatic project and is the setting for his use of the concept of "field". The triune economy is seen to be completed in pneumatology. The Spirit is viewed as the principle of

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[703] The other major influence on Pannenberg's thought here is Hegel. Robert Jenson writes of Hegel's conception of Spirit: "*The Spirit is the act in which God as Consciousness overcomes history's apparently static standoffs, by creative discovery of the meaning of the contradictions.* The Spirit is the freedom of whatever merely is, and just so is in some contradiction, for the new synthesis that will come of that conflict." "Holy Spirit", p.168 [*italics* are mine]. Pannenberg is equally opposed to the association of spirit with mind, and adopts too Hegel's analysis of the Spirit as bringing about the consummation and perfection of history. Also in common are the high value placed upon and associations between the concepts of spirit, freedom and transcendence. However, Jenson goes on to criticise Hegel, and the broad structure of his criticism is, I suggest, what is at the heart of the criticism of the early Pannenberg: "To reclaim Hegel's truth for the gospel, we need only a small but drastic amendment: Absolute Consciousness finds its own meaning and self in the *one* historical object, Jesus, and *so* posits Jesus' fellows as its fellows and Jesus' world as its world. What we thereby provide a theory for is the assertion of the risen Jesus' universal lordship." ibid, pp.168-9.

[704] Seeking to justify this Pannenberg writes: "Only an understanding of the Spirit on the basis of his function in creation and this regard to his contribution to an explanation of nature can overcome the subjectivistic bias of traditional Christian piety and thought in dealing with the spirit." "The Doctrine of the Spirit", p.13.

[705] Notice the way in which redemption is explained in very vague, almost Existentialist terms, in this passage where Pannenberg appears to link creation and redemption. A distinction between the Spirit's operation in creation in general and in the indwelling of the Christian believer is not clearly made, principally because Christology seems to be absent from soteriology at this point. "And only because it is the same spirit that created all life by inspiring its abundant self-transcendence, it provides no escapist opiate, but the power of sustaining to and finally overcoming the absurdities and adversities of the present world." The Doctrine of the Spirit", p.21.

[706] W. Pannenberg, *Basic Questions in Theology* (Gottesgedanke und menschliche Freiheit), Vol.III (London, SCM Press, 1973), p.95.

[707] David Polk describes Pannenberg's approach as a "post-theistic vision." D. Polk, *On the Way to God: An Exploration into the Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg* (Lanham, University of America Press, 1989), p.272.

the creative presence of the transcendent God within his creation, and as the medium of the participation of created life in the trinitarian Divine life. In volume III the full eschatological role of the Spirit is unveiled: bringing the economy of salvation to perfection; enabling believers to participate in the eternal life of God in filial relationships; binding believers in the communion of the body of Christ where the Spirit is received; orientating them towards the Kingdom of God. The question we must pursue is whether, despite his attempt in his *Systematics* to redress many of the deficiencies of the early work, Pannenberg's pneumatology, which utilises the concept of 'field,' really does escape the inheritance of his early corpus and is given a sufficiently personal basis.

Pannenberg, relying on the work of Max Jammer, dates the concept of 'field' to the Stoic concept of *pneuma*, which was influential in framing the modern scientific concept. This origination in non-scientific thinking lends justification, according to Pannenberg, for its adoption in theology.[709] He views the development of the concept by modern science as actually opening up its potential application to theology: "The field theories of modern physics which have developed in the train of the Stoic view of *pneuma* no longer view field phenomena as bodily entities but see them as independent of matter and defined only by their relations to space and space-time."[710] The arguments which Pannenberg proffers for using the term in the theological arena may be divided into three areas.

I.01)The First Argument: 'God is Spirit'.

The first argument comes in volume 1 of Pannenberg's systematics, within a discussion of the will and knowledge of God as an agent. Here he considers God as a spiritual being and the merits of the concepts of *pneuma* and *nous* as applied to the Divine.[711] The patristic era rejected the Stoic doctrine of a physical *pneuma* in favour of the conception of God as

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[708] For an excellent overview of the *Systematics* see Christoph Schwöbel, "Rational Theology in Trinitarian Perspective: Wolfhart Pannenberg's *Systematic Theology*," *Journal of Theological Studies*,Vol.47 (1996), pp. 498 - 527.

[709] W. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p 382.

[710] ibid..

[711] The concept of *nous* is not the same as my concept of the 'personal', and therefore, I do not consider Pannenberg's critique of the application of *nous* to God to effect the utility of my concept. He seems to associate *nous* with 'consciousness', 'self-consciousness', a 'rational being', an 'intellect' and 'will'. It should be noted that none of these concepts need be linked with my definition of what it is to be "personal" predicated of 'a centre of intentional agency'.

spiritual mind (*nous*), which Pannenberg finds inadequate.[712] The appropriation of the modern scientific concept of a 'field', rid of its physical connotations in Stoicism, is seen as a renaissance of the concept of *pneuma*. The following points are then made about God's Spirit as a force field:

1.) The Spirit is the force field of 'God's mighty presence.'[713]

2.) This relieves one of having to describe the Spirit as a subject, in contrast to the concept of *nous*, so avoiding tritheism or monism.[714]

3.) "The deity as field can find equal manifestation in all three persons."[715] The concept of field need not be used of one divine subject, and hence the divine essence considered as a field can be common to all three *hypostaseis*.

4.) Points 1.) and 3.) seem to be held together in the following argument:

> The idea of the divine life as a dynamic field sees the divine Spirit who unites the three persons as proceeding from the Father, received by the Son, and common to both, so that precisely in this way he is the force field of their fellowship that is distinct from them both. An ancient problem of the doctrine of the Trinity was that the term Spirit denotes on the one side (John 4.24) the divine essence that is common to all three persons, and on the other the third trinitarian person alongside the Father and the Son and also distinct from them as he glorifies the Son in the Father and the Father in the Son.[716]

5.) The Spirit is defined as the Divine essence.[717]

One can see that Pannenberg wishes to use the non-personal concept of the 'field', while at the same time maintaining the personal reality of the trinitarian *hypostaseis*.

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[712] *Systematic Theology*, Vol.1, pp. 370-81. As is often the case with Pannenberg's tendency to revel in the historical overview of an issue, it is difficult to separate his own argument against the use of the concept of *nous*. Drawing on Spinoza, Hume and Kant, he seems to endorse the view that 'self-consciousness' cannot be applied to the divine without causing disastrous consequences ("human mental life fluctuates, and self-consciousness presupposes something over and against it from which to distinguish itself." ibid., p.376. Hegel's response links the divine too closely with the world process. The outcome of our tour through these historical arguments is that applying the concept of *nous* to the divine "demands so many changes in the phenomenon of reason as we know it that it can have no more than metaphorical significance." ibid., p. 379. Pannenberg goes on to remark that, "This does not mean, of course, that the idea is meaningless or dispensable." ibid.. But this is not the conclusion that we find at the end of the section: "Critical reflection has dissolved the idea of *nous* as subject of the divine action." ibid., pp. 384. This backtracking on the criteria of judging his argument is not only slipshod, but highly self-contradictory. First, the piecemeal argument which Pannenberg presents is hardly rigorous enough to convince any Analytic philosopher, and secondly, if all he has shown is that qualities of the human mind can only be applied analogously to God, that is precisely the same for his preferred concept of a 'force field'. Both are used metaphorically, so ruling out the use of *nous* on the grounds that it is a metaphor, also negates his development of the concept of a 'field'.

[713] ibid., p.382.

[714] ibid., p.383.

[715] ibid..

[716] ibid..

[717] ibid., p.384.

The concept of a 'force field' is introduced without an explanation of how it is being used.[718] Is it a metaphor? Is it denotative or connotative? Is it law-like? Does it possess explanatory and predictive power as scientists claim that a physical field does? As Jeffrey Wicken argues if science is going to be appropriated in some way by theologians, "Terms with specific denotative meanings must not be muddied over with a connotative penumbra."[719] The key challenge facing Pannenberg's position is how the concept of 'field,' specifically point 2.), is compatible with the Spirit being personal. Classical field theory, Pannenberg's source, concerns systems whose (measurable) physical properties at each instant of time are given by a collection of real-valued functions on some region of space. The functions are called fields. A field is a physical entity whose observable value varies with position and with time, and although a field might be considered to be an "interpenetrating network of energetic forces," energy is still a physical feature.[720] How can such a definition of a field be considered to be personal in the sense given in my introduction? Certainly Fritjof Capra in his popular book *The Tao of Physics*, believes he can apply the concept of a field to non-personal, non-theistic Eastern religion.[721] Pannenberg does not have some privileged right to use the concept for his own Christian end, so the onus is on him to explain exactly how the concept is being used and why it is compatible with the personal reality of the Holy Spirit.

It is unclear as to whether point 3.) means that the three *hypostaseis* are to be conceived of as fields. Such a meaning is surely excluded by the specific association given to the relation of the Spirit and the field. Or perhaps that the field represents some fourth entity

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[718] John Polkinghorne concurs with this observation in, "Wolfhart Pannenberg's Engagement with the Natural Sciences," *Zygon*, Vol.34 (1999), pp. 153-4.

[719] Jeffrey S Wicken,, "Theology and Science in the Evolving Cosmos: A Need for Dialogue". *Zygon*, Vol. 23 (1988), p.48.

[720] John Polkinghorne criticises Pannenberg for failing to recognise this: "It is important to recognise that energy is not a kind of *spiritual* concept. Einstein's famous equation, E=mc2, asserts the materiality of energy as much as it does the energetic character of matter. A physical field, such as Maxwell's electromagnetic field, carries energy and momentum, inertial properties that function in the same way for the field as they do for particles of matter." "Wolfhart Pannenberg's Engagement with the Natural Sciences," p.154.

[721] Notice the odd parallels, but clear difference of intention between Fritjof Capra's application of the concept of a 'field' to Chinese philosophy and Pannenberg's use: "the field idea is not only implicit in the notion of the *Tao* as being empty and formless, and yet producing all forms, but is also expressed explicitly in the concept of *ch'i*....The word *ch'i* literally means 'gas' or 'ether', and was used in ancient China to denote the vital breath or energy animating the cosmos. .... Like the quantum field, *ch'i* is conceived as a tenuous and non-perceptible form of matter which is present throughout space and can condense into solid material objects." F. Capra, *The Tao of Physics*, new edition (London: Flamingo, 1983), p.236.

over and above the *hypostaseis*? The danger of modalism lurks in the background for this interpretation. Alternatively, it could mean that the Spirit as field is manifested in all the *hypostaseis*. This is the most likely interpretation. How then can Stanley Grenz interpret the meaning as, "the Godhead thought of in terms of a dynamic field can appear in an equal way in all three persons"?[722] For how can the *hypostasis* of the Spirit be identified as the field, yet also manifest that same field? Is this not a confusion similar to any attempt, in the language of traditional trinitarian theology, to predicate both the concepts of *hypostasis* and *ousia* to one member of the Trinity? There is also a lack of clarity in the relation between 1.), 3.) and 4.). How does 1.), the Spirit as a field of God's presence, relate to 3.), the field which is represented as the unity of the three *hypostasis*, and then to 4.) which sees this uniting field as specifically predicated of the Spirit? How many fields are actually being postulated?

When we come to point 4.), we see the real motivation of Pannenberg's position. He believes that this alternative to, what I shall call, '*nous*-theology', captures the way in which the Bible and Christian tradition has used the concept of 'spirit' in a dual way as both a general predicate of divinity and in reference to a particular Divine *hypostasis*. To support his position that the concept of 'spirit' or *pneuma* has a general reference in the Christian tradition, he cites only John 4.24. On this verse Raymond Brown comments:

> *God is Spirit.* This is not an essential definition of God, but a description of God's dealing with men; it means that God is Spirit toward men because He gives the Spirit (xiv 16) which begets them anew. There are two other descriptions in the Johannine writings: 'God is light' and 'God is love'(1 Jn iv 8). These too refer to the God who acts; God gives the world His Son, the *light* of the world (iii 19, viii 12, ix 5) as a sign of His *love* (iii 16).[723]

Brown makes it clear that 'God is Spirit', in John's Gospel, is not a metaphysical definition of God's essence.[724] In reference to the "God is..." statements in the Johannine literature, Brown writes:

> There is a tendency of predicate nouns to be anarthrous with the possible exception of statements of identity, and so commentators have concluded that these are not statements of identity but at most descriptions of a quality of God, or existential statements about God's activity toward human beings, e.g., the God who is love shows that love by giving His own Son (1 Jn 4.8-

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[722] Stanley Grenz, *The Systematic Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg* (New York: OUP, 1990), p.61.
[723] Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, I-XII, p.172.
[724] Barnabas Lindars concurs with this reading: "**God is spirit** is not a metaphysical statement but much more a character-description, like 'God is light'..." Lindars, p. 190.

> 10). Nevertheless, these formulas also touch upon the mystery of God's own being. For instance, the Johannine Jesus speaks not only of God's love for human beings but (logically) first of all of God's love for him, the Son (Jn 3.35 ..), a love that is the model of God's love for Jesus' followers.....Thus, in such 'God is' formulas, while there is emphasis on God's activity, that activity is internally related to what God is before creation.[725]

The verse links in a practical way Spirit and worship, and is not an abstract homily on the essence of God: "Jesus explains that true worship can come only from those begotten by the Spirit of truth. Only through the Spirit does the Father beget true worshippers."[726] As Barnabas Lindars adds: "the point is that like requires like.....The argument is exactly the same as 3.8: the God-like person (in 3.8 compared to the wind) alone can have fellowship with God (3.3, 5), and the God-like person alone can offer true worship to God."[727]

The verse may well have multiple meanings. Certainly C.K. Barrett argues for two related meanings. The belief that God was not corporeal in the human sense comes from Stoic and Hellenistic philosophy (c.f. John 3.8): "The proposition 'God is Spirit' means that he is invisible and unknowable(c.f. 1.18)."[728]. Secondly, we have the disclosure of God through *pneuma*: "the Spirit, the Paraclete, brings home to men the truth revealed in Jesus (John.14.26, 16.14)."[729] However, Barrett does not explain why John should be interested in Stoic/Hellenistic philosophy.[730] Brown's reading has more weight, certainly as the primary reading of the text. In contrast, Pannenberg treats the verse as a proof text, with no investigation of whether his reading is exegesis or eisegesis. He plays on the initial ambiguity of the verse to associate it both with a general (God is incorporeal) and a particular (the Holy Spirit is a divine *hypostasis*) interpretation, neither of which are the meaning of this verse.

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[725] R.E. Brown, *The Epistles of John* (New York, Doubleday & Co., 1982), pp.194-5.
[726] Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, p.177.
[727] C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel of John*, p.189.
[728] Barrett, *The Gospel According to John*. 2nd edition (London: SPCK, 1978), p.238.
[729] ibid., pp.238-9.
[730] Leon Morris seems at first to support Barrett's two-layered reading, but then, rather interestingly and somewhat inconsistently, appears to plump for one over the other. First, the 'general' reading, which would endorse Pannenberg's position: "Here Jesus is not saying, 'God is one spirit among many'. Rather His meaning is, 'God's essential nature is spirit'. .... We must not think of God as material, or bound in any way to places or things." Morris, p.271. Then, a more convincing reading, which emphasises the particular Spirit and the context of worship, which does not sit well with the first reading: "In view of the references to living water (which symbolizes the life-giving Spirit) in the context it is probable that this verse contains an allusion to the life-giving activity of God. This is all the more likely in that when the Old Testament refers to the Spirit of God, the usual idea is that of divine activity, not of opposition to things material. John not

Finally, let us turn directly to Pannenberg's conception of Spirit in terms of the categories of the general divine essence and the particular *hypostasis*.[731] Pannenberg is aware that, "As a field, of course, the Spirit would be impersonal."[732] At the same time, he wishes to safeguard the Spirit as a distinct divine *hypostasis*: "The Spirit as person can be thought of only as a concrete form of the one deity like the Father and Son."[733] Yet, the solution is a concoction of both, the general and the particular:

> But the Spirit is not just the divine life that is common to both the Father and the Son. He also stands over and against the Father and the Son as his own center of action. This makes sense if the Father and the Son have fellowship in the unity of divine life only as they stand over and against the person of the Spirit. Precisely because the common essence of the deity stands over and against both - in different ways - in the form of the Spirit, they are related to one another by the unity of the Spirit.[734]

This seems contradictory giving the particular, namely the *hypostasis*, the character of the general, viz. the 'divine essence' or the 'force field'. The Spirit is personal by warrant of its status as a divine *hypostasis*, yet its status as *hypostasis* comes about "precisely because the *common essence* of the deity [i.e. the Spirit] stands over against both [Father and Son]."[735] Pannenberg does not distance himself from his identification of the Spirit with the 'force field', and so, as he concedes, the force field cannot be conceived of as being personal.

<u>1.02) The Second Argument: God is Love.</u>

In a later section of volume 1 we find what one may hope to be a clarification of Pannenberg's position. In fact, the argument is similar to the first one, revolving as it does around another biblical proof text. The setting of the argument is a discussion of 'The Love

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infrequently combines the ideas of Spirit and life (cf. 6:63). God is a living God. Since He is ceaselessly active as the life-giving Spirit He must be worshipped in a manner befitting such a Spirit." ibid., p.272.

[731] I note here that Pannenberg's full position on the question of the constitution of triune unity is more complicated than a mere appeal to the Spirit. He later says that, "Both the Father and Spirit in their different ways represent the Godhead as a whole." *Systematic Theology*, Vol.1, p.429. His approach to the question seems to be multifaceted. His account of trinitarian unity depends on a specific reworking of 'divine essence', its association with both the concepts of love and field, in turn connected to the Spirit; an understanding of unity arising from mutual relations, which effects a sharing of divine attributes.

[732] *Systematic Theology*, Vol.1, p.383.

[733] ibid..

[734] ibid., p.384.

[735] ibid. (the *italics* are mine).

of God', which culminates in a deliberation on 'The Unity of God'. The points Pannenberg makes can be broken down in the following way:

1.) Love (1 John 4:8, 16) is the divine essence.[736]

2.) "It [Love] is the materially concrete form of 'Spirit' as the characteristic of God's essence."[737]

3.) The Spirit as love is the union of the *hypostaseis*:

> The essence of the Godhead is indeed the Spirit. It is the Spirit as a dynamic field, and as its manifestation in the coming forth of the Son shows itself to be the work of the Father, the dynamic of the Spirit radiates from the Father, but in such a way that the Son receives it as gift, and it fills him and radiates back from him to the Father.[738]

4.) Nevertheless, the distinct *hypostasis* of the Spirit is maintained: "The Spirit comes forth as a separate hypostasis as he comes over against the Son and the Father as the divine essence, common to both, which actually unites them and also attests and maintains their unity in face of distinction."[739]

5.) In conclusion, the same dual role is given to the Spirit as before, both particular and general: "On the one side the Spirit and love constitute the common essence of deity, and on the other they come forth as a separate hypostasis in the Holy Spirit."[740] The Spirit is also the source of unity and the essence of divinity: "The divine persons, then, are concretions of the divine reality as Spirit. They are individual aspects of the dynamic field of the eternal Godhead."[741]

Much of this second argument is a repeat of the first. Thus Pannenberg still fails to explain the conditions of his use of the concept of a 'force field'. What is of note is the association of the Spirit with love. One might first imagine that Pannenberg's linking of the Spirit and love is intended, in some way, to give more credence to the *personal* existence of the *hypostasis* of the Spirit. However, on reflection, it is quite clear that connection between Spirit and love is a further explanation of the Spirit's general function as divine essence and source of triune unity. The idea that the Spirit is love and that this constitutes the Divine unity seems to be an Augustinian move. The problem with the Augustinian

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[736] ibid., p.427.
[737] ibid..
[738] ibid., p.429.
[739] ibid..
[740] ibid., p.430.

position is that if the Spirit is defined as an intentional state or relational complex, that is as love, it seems to lose its distinctness and 'personhood'.[742] Pannenberg is aware of this problem,[743] however he wishes to hold on to a "deeper truth in Augustine's view of the Spirit as the love that unites the Father and Son."[744] He rightly claims that, "The Gospels trace back the relation of Jesus to the Father being filled by the Spirit"[745] This is insufficient to support the identification of the Spirit and love. It is one thing to hold that the Spirit as a divine *hypostasis* has an eternal role in *personally* binding together the Father and Son in fellowship, in J.V. Taylor's words, the Spirit is the 'Go-between God'. It is another thing altogether, to then go on and qualify this function by saying that the Spirit is 'love' (an intentional state or relation, detached from a centre of agency) or the 'divine essence,' which orthodox theology has rightly considered to be predicated of all three *hypostaseis*. For Pannenberg to state that "the personhood of the Spirit....is a necessary premise of his work of fellowship of the Son with the Father," in lieu of the above critique seems to be a mere assertion.

As with Pannenberg's use of the proof text of John 4.28, his treatment of I John 4: 8, 16, "God is love", suffers from a similar exegetical deficiency. Brown maintains that "God is love" is part of the Johannine "God is.." statements, and so is comparable with the function of John 4.24.[746] The verse is clearly grounded in practical issues for Christian discipleship

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[741] ibid..

[742] See Gunton, "God the Holy Spirit," pp.109-10.

[743] To be fair to Pannenberg, he has already recognised this problem earlier in his historical discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity: "Augustine described the Spirit as the eternal communion of the Father and Son, as the love (*caritas*) that unites them. Along these lines it was thus natural that the proposal should be made to see the Spirit not as a distinct person alongside the Father and Spirit but as the 'we' of their communion. Orthodoxy replied, of course, that this is to eliminate his person. The criticism is correct, for there is no place for the self-distinction of the Spirit from the Father and the Son whom he glorifies if he viewed merely as the 'we' of their communion." *Systematic Theology*, Vol.1, pp. 315-16.

[744] ibid., p.316.

[745] ibid.. The biblical passages he utilises to support this claim are: Rom.1.4; Rom.8.14-15; Luke 1.35; Luke 10.21; John 16.14.

[746] R.E. Brown comments: "As in the other two Johannine descriptions, 'God is Spirit'(Jn 4.24) and 'God is light'(1 Jn 1.5), the predicate is anarthrous. The author does not say simply, 'God loves', for loving is not just another action of God, like ruling. Rather, all God's activity is loving activity. Nor does the author say, 'Love is God'; for he is interested in the loving activity of a person, not in abstract definitions." *The Epistles of John*, p.515. K. Grayston adds: "[I]t must be argued that **God is love** does not function mainly as describing God's activity but as defining the condition on which God may be known. Compare the Jewish *Shema* in Dt. 6:4, which does not exist to provide information about the unity of God but sets down the condition on which God will benefit his people: 'The Lord is our God, the Lord alone'." K. Grayston, *The New Century Bible Commentary: The Johannine Epistles* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), p.124.

and the economy of salvation, not the metaphysics of God.[747] Love is not used in I John 4 in specific relation to the Spirit, but primarily in relation to Christ.

In sum, Pannenberg resolves none of the problems which were raised about his first argument from 'God is Spirit'. Indeed, he further re-enforces the interpretation that he is unable to maintain the personal *hypostasis* of the Spirit, by predicating of the Spirit both the concept of the 'field' and 'love.' He does so by basing both arguments on inadequate exegesis of two biblical verses, which he uses as proof texts, but which ought not to function in that way.

1.03) Spirit, Field and Creation.

In volume II Pannenberg includes a discussion of the Spirit as a force field in his doctrine of creation. The Spirit is interpreted as 'the life-giving principle,' to whom creatures owe not so much their particularity, order and independence - that is due to the Logos of creation - but their 'life, movement and activity.'[748] Whereas the Son's role in creation acts to validate creaturely otherness and distinction by his self-differentiation from the Father, the Spirit's role is "the link and movement that connects the creatures to one another and God."[749] Thus, the generating question of my theses is explicitly addressed by Pannenberg in his trinitarian Christology not in his pneumatology.[750] The 'analogy' with field theory in

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[747] Judith Lieu concurs: "[Y]et it is rooted in God as experienced, and is directed towards the inescapable conditions for those who claim to continue to experience God. It is surely right to draw the conclusion, as is often done, that the saying means not just that all God's activity is loving activity, but 1 John is more concerned with the conclusion that love must characterise those who claim fellowship with this God. In v.8 the affirmation explains the previous such assertion, while in v.16 it is followed by one." J. Lieu, *The Theology of the Johannine Epistles* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), p.67.

[748] Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p.76.

[749] ibid., p.84.

[750] In this thesis we are concerned with the pneumatological version of the question, and Pannenberg's christological approach remains unconvincing. Pannenberg writes that the self-distinction of the Son from the Father, is according to Pannenberg, the key to "the participation of God in the life of creatures." ibid., pp.58. The self-distinction is evident from the New Testament's witness to the subordination of Jesus to the Father, but also the very act of the Incarnation of becoming a creature: "For if the eternal Son in the humility of his self-distinction from the Father moves out of the unity of the deity by letting the Father alone be God, then the creature emerges over against the Father, the creature for whom the relation to the Father and Creator is fundamental, i.e. the human creature." ibid., pp. 22. Several problems present themselves here. First, if we are to follow orthodox trinitarian theology, God is not only God as Father, but also as Son and Spirit and the Son is never merely "creature," but a unique union of two natures, "truly God and truly man." Secondly, Pannenberg's position that the self-distinction provides an "*ontic* basis for the existence of the creature in its distinction from the Creator," fails to show why this is so when Jesus is never a creature in quite the same way as we are, as the subject of his personhood is the *Logos*, who is consubstantial with the Father. ibid.. Does this then really safeguard the integrity of the identity of the creature? The same question, it may be recalled, was posed of Barth. The idea that the Son "moves out of the unity of the deity by letting the Father alone be God," again is unclear. The Son is *homo-ousios* with the Father so unity remains. If radical *kenosis*

theoretical physics, is aimed at helping to conceive of 'movement and change'[751] and the concept of the Spirit.[752]

To avoid a form of unitarianism, Pannenberg writes that it is the field which is "structured in a trinitarian fashion". He continues: "The person of the Holy Spirit is not himself to be understood as the field, but as a unique manifestation (singularity) of the field of the divine essentiality."[753] Now, this seems to be a move away from the position articulated in volume I, in which the Spirit was described as the field uniting the three persons. It also makes us question, in the absence of an explanation of how this divine field operates in relation to the *hypostaseis*, whether or not the field represents a form of modalism. The field appears to constitute an entity behind the 'manifestations' or *hypostaseis*. Indeed, without an explanation as to the compatibility of the personal nature of the Spirit and the employment of the concept of the field, how can the *hypostaseis* be personal if they are mere manifestations of a field?[754]

Pannenberg's discussion of field and Spirit overlaps with his theories on space and time.[755] Briefly, Pannenberg wishes to give priority to time over space, and sees eternity as the necessary framework for understanding the nature of time. This he views as giving precedence to the future in theories of time, and helps to explain the only additional description of the Spirit's relation to the concept of field in volume II:

> We are thus to think of the dynamic of the divine Spirit as a working field linked to time and space - to time by the power of the future that gives creatures their own present and duration, and to space by the simultaneity of creatures in their duration. From the standpoint of the creature, origin from the future of the Spirit has the appearance of the past. But the working

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is assumed, how much *kenosis* may take place before the *Logos* loses His Divinity and how is it then restored? The influence of Hegel is important here, but Pannenberg wishes to correct Hegel's version of the argument that "in the Trinity the Son is the principle of otherness, the starting point for the emergence of the finite as that which is absolutely other than deity." ibid., p.28. The corrective is to apply a perichoretic understanding of the persons of the Trinity. Yet, this appears to deny his statements above about the Son letting the "Father alone be God."

[751] ibid., p.79.

[752] ibid., p.83.

[753] ibid..

[754] Do the divine *hypostaseis* as concrete, particular existents, *together* constitute the field? If this were so then the problem of essence above and beyond the *hypostaseis* would be avoided, for the *hypostaseis* in their relation would constitute the field. I am not therefore, denying that the metaphor may have some positive uses in relation to trinitarian theology.

[755] This may reflect the importance of space-time co-ordinates in measuring fields.

> of the Spirit constantly encounters the creature as its future, which embraces its origin and its possible fulfilment.[756]

This is hardly an analogical application of the concept of field. It gives substance to Jeffrey Wicken's questioning of whether Pannenberg's use of the concept of field is "overly bound to physical science."[757] Commenting on Pannenberg's observation of the transition from the Stoic to the contemporary scientific understanding of field, Wicken, who is himself a scientist, writes:

> [Pannenberg] believes that this dematerialization of the field gives God (being immaterial) a kind of physical justification in nature's wholeness. Although as metaphor this notion is rich for theology, taken literally it binds God needlessly to physics. Is God conceived here as a *field as in physics*? If so, why the need for God at all? If not, the relativistic reification of the space-field seems important to theology only in the sense of showing that nature has its own grounds for wholeness that might provide boundary conditions for God's presence in nature.[758]

Science utilises the concept of a field for explanatory or predictive potency. Are we to imagine that divine providence also has a law-like pattern, which a theological use of the concept of a field will help to predict? Wicken comments further:

> I am especially concerned about biased assignments of ontological priorities in Pannenberg's field-interpretation of nature, which seems to treat a field *itself* as a 'whole' exerting regulative influences (God's hand) over material elements. It is not. Granted, space consists of fields of force which exert regulative controls on material elements; but its 'structure' is reciprocally regulated by those elements and their movements. The two together constitute the only 'whole' of which physics can speak. If all the matter were removed from the universe there would be no field.....Space and matter *coevolved*, and are *relationally constituted* by each other. They have no identities apart from each other.[759]

The danger here is that of tying God too closely to the world process, which undermines the concept of *creatio ex nihilo* and God's sovereignty over creation.

To conclude, Pannenberg's account of the concept of 'field' in relation to pneumatology is unsatisfactory. It is not firmly grounded in an explanation of the conditions of the use of the concept, and does not fully overcome the problems which are latent in his early work.

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[756] ibid., p.102.
[757] Wicken, "Theology and Science in the Evolving Cosmos," p.51.
[758] ibid., p.52.
[759] ibid..

All in all Pannenberg's position does not advance beyond the tension to be found in the biblical witness between the personal and non-personal language used of the Spirit. By his identification of the Spirit first with a force field and then with love, Pannenberg actually undermines the Spirit's standing as a personal *hypostasis*. Noticeably, the analogy is not pursued by Pannenberg when he comes to explicate matters of soteriology and ecclesiology in volume III. In fact, he wishes to draw a distinction between the Spirit's work in creation as "an external, invisible, and incomprehensible field of force," and, what he seems to consider a more appropriate metaphor for the Spirit's role in soteriology/ecclesiology, a 'gift.'[760] In relation to the generating question of my thesis, Panneneberg's use of the concept of 'field' in pneumatology has very little explanatory power. The idea of human existence being centred in divine action may be safeguarded by the use of classical doctrines of general and special concurrence. No account is given of how the Spirit's action conceived in terms of a "force field" may bring about Christian *metamorphosis* in a way which safeguards human freedom and identity, and involves interaction at a personal level.

II) Welker on the Spirit as a Force Field of Love.

Pannenberg is not alone in appropriating the scientific concept of 'field' for theological purposes, and our task is to see whether or not a more convincing account may be given. In section III of his article "The Holy Spirit,"[761] Michael Welker is concerned to explain the biblical metaphor of the "pouring out" of the Spirit "from heaven". In this regard he refers to the analogy with field theory in theoretical physics: "For the individual human being, however, the pouring out of the spirit means that he or she stands in a force field, in which he or she is more and more filled with 'the fullness of God'(Eph. 3:19)."[762] As with Pannenberg there is an astonishing absence of any explanation of what the conditions of using the analogy are.

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[760] *Systematic Theology*, Vol.3., p.7.
[761] M. Welker, "The Holy Spirit," *Theology Today*, Vol. 46 (1998), pp. 5-20. Much of the same material appears in Welker's later monograph entitled, *God the Spirit*, trans. J. F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 311-315.
[762] ibid., p.17.

Welker at least addresses head on the issue of how the concept of field may be considered to be compatible with personal identity. Opposing a conception of personhood as "an individual-human center of action," he writes:

> [I]f what is at issue is the Holy Spirit as a clearly determinable, individual center of action, if that is what personhood must mean, then one will not be able to point to anything but Jesus Christ. He is the individual-human center of action of the spirit.[763]

One may agree that the Spirit mediates the Son and the Father, but insofar as one can identify acts of the Spirit, such as at Pentecost, or in the life of Samson, then one can surely ask: what or who brought about such acts/events? As we have seen from our discussion of the Spirit in Chapter 1, the Spirit's role is not just to re-iterate what has already been given in Christ. He has the eschatological function of completing revelation and expounding "what is to come"(John 16.13). Welker has given no reason why one should not predicate these actions of the *hypostasis* of the Spirit. The "selflessness of the spirit" in her mediatorial role is not a sufficient reason to deny the Spirit intentional agency. All the members of the Trinity embrace a 'selflessness,' as Augustine made clear, in that they are all involved in each other's intentional acts and all are 'self-giving.' The pattern of the Spirit's action in fact mirrors the action of Jesus as obedient Son to the Father. If one pushes Welker's view to its logical conclusion, one could question predicating the Son as a centre of action.[764]

What Welker is reacting against in all this is, what he calls, a 'one-sided and simplistic' conception of personhood. A conception of personhood as a centre of human self-consciousness and agency, must be balanced with a social and relational conception, which he wishes to term 'a domain of resonance.' It is this understanding of the importance of the 'multiple webs of relationships' which is constitutive in the formation of a person. From here his next move is to apply this distinction between personhood as 'self-conscious center of actions', and the 'personal unity which we are in the *external perspective*', to the Trinity. Thus, in one sense he does wish to say that the Spirit is truly personal, while holding that this is, at the same time, compatible with the idea of the Spirit as a field.

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[763] ibid..

[764] Perhaps Welker's hesitancy to describe the Spirit as a centre of action rests on a confusion between the agency of the Spirit and what might be called the Spirit's "personality". It is questionable whether the concept of 'personality' is really appropriate for predication of the Divine *hypostaseis*.

> The Holy Spirit is to be understood as the multiform unity of perspectives on Jesus Christ, a unity in which we participate and which we help to constitute. The Holy Spirit is thus *Christ's domain of resonance*. The Spirit is the public person who corresponds to the individual Jesus Christ.[765]

Is the Spirit really the relational web which centres around both Christ's creaturely and divine relations?[766] One may think that the whole point of a relational conception of personhood is to be interactive, 'two way' or multidimensional. If this were so, it appears that creation is constitutive in forming the 'personhood' and identity of the Spirit. Some may be content with that direction in theology,[767] but it clearly undermines divine transcendence and sovereign grace. Perhaps Welker means that the Holy Spirit is 'Christ's domain of resonance,' in the sense of the network of relations which surround Christ. However, this would confuse the identity of the human Jesus with the Spirit, denying the humanity of Jesus proper responsibility for its creaturely relations.

Welker writes that the Holy Spirit is the 'public person who corresponds to the individual Jesus Christ.' Jesus Christ was a public person in the ordinary sense of the word. It would be a little odd to say that the Spirit represented his acts and relationships in his earthly existence. Welker might say that, post-Ascension, Jesus' human personhood is no longer public, and hence, it is precisely the Spirit who continues and mediates the relationship. This may be theological unobjectionable, but it does not do enough to guarantee the personhood of the Spirit. Welker has already stated two conditions for personhood: 1.) being an individual, self-conscious centre of action; and, 2.) being part of a 'domain of resonance' or relational web. The Spirit comes off rather badly from these conditions. Only the second criteria applies, and it is Jesus' personhood that fulfils the first. This makes the Spirit an exception to the rule, only fulfilling one of the criteria. It appears that the Spirit amounts to a purely relational reality, which is a non-personal outcome. Perhaps Welker does not actually believe that criteria 1.) is necessary for personhood. If he does, this

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[765] ibid., p.19.

[766] Does that mean when I pray to Christ, my prayer and worship is somehow to be considered as partly constituting the Spirit? If we think further along these lines, is Welker actually saying that the Spirit is identical to the natural relations which Jesus as a human being would have had with the material world?

[767] Peter Hodgson is a good example of one who utilises non-personal language in relation to the Spirit and combines it with a "process view" of God: "There are no such pre-existing persons in God [i.e. trinitarian *hypostaseis*] but rather potentials for relations that become actual when God creates the world as other than God..... Thus Spirit is an *emergent* person (not an individual but a social person), generated out of the interaction of God and the world, in the process of which the world is liberated and God is perfected." *Winds of the Spirit*, pp.282-3.

would reduce personhood to the non-personal category of relations, without answering the question of who or what does the relating. Relations can be affirmed as integral personhood, without relationality being identified as the sole constituent of personhood. The conclusion is that Welker is caught in a no-win situation. His position denies the personhood of Jesus its natural instantiation of criteria 2.), so limiting Jesus' personhood, while in the case of the Spirit denying the application of criteria 1.), and hence, also negating the Spirit's full personhood.

Welker ends with a move into ecclesiology. If the Spirit constitutes Christ's 'domain of resonance' and if human beings can become involved in this field, then:

> These human beings, mutually strengthening each other, constitute the field of Christ's power in the most diverse contexts and situations of life. This power is twofold: it both radiates outward and attracts others to its source. To be one with Christ, to be of Christ's spirit, to be in Christ, to bear Christ's spirit in us - these expressions from the Bible each illuminate one aspect of this differentiated, creative relation of unity. What one sees here is a relation of trusting intimacy with God - indeed, a participation in God - which, at the same time, takes seriously our concreteness and finitude, our frailty and fragility.[768]

Many questions remain unresolved. Has Welker clearly distinguished the activity of the Spirit from the existence of human beings? How does this position take seriously our particularity and finitude? After all, on one reading, the Spirit *is* precisely the relations between the divine and human. What are the conditions of the operation of the Spirit-field? How is the Spirit's personhood to be validated?

In conclusion, Welker's conception of a field as a 'domain of resonance' in relation to a human person has at least provided us with some kind of handle on how the concept of a field might work in the personal domain. His arguments, though, are finally unconvincing and leave us in no better position to develop a synthesis of the 'personal' and 'non-personal' biblical metaphors used of the Spirit. However, arguments against two specific proposals for non-personal models does not mean that the development of such models, in general in the future, is moribund. The challenge, which presents itself to future developments of non-personal models, is to show their compatibility with the predication of personal

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[768] Welker, "The Holy Spirit," p.20.

attributes to God.[769] In the next section it will be argued that the non-personal imagery used of the Spirit in the Christian tradition can be explained in a different way and so the importance of trying to combine or complement personal/non-personal models of the activity of the Spirit becomes less significant.

III.) An Alternative Strategy.

III.01) An 'Error Theory' Applied to Non-personal Descriptions of the Spirit.

David Brown argues that the personal language used in relation to the Spirit "cannot carry the day, unless reinforced by some account of why the disciples were wrong to regard the earliest definitive experiences as impersonal."[770] I wish now to examine such an argument to see if this is the way forward to resolve our initial problem of how the personal and non-personal language used of the Spirit may be compatible.

Brown's argument can be summarised as follows.

1. In the light of the resurrection appearances and the Ascension, Pentecost was unlikely to be experienced by the disciples as an encounter with Christ, and so "there would have been a puzzle as to who this person could possibly be."[771] With the disciples' roots in Jewish monotheism, the postulation of a third being over and above Jesus and the Father (who remained transcendent) would have presented a noetic difficulty.

I do not quite see how this argument fits with Peter's recognition that it is the Spirit that is at work at Pentecost (Acts 2.33). In Chapter 4 of Acts, the disciples mention the Holy Spirit in their prayer (v.25), before being 'filled with the Holy Spirit'(v.31). Furthermore, if we are to believe Luke and John's account, Jesus actually prophesies the pouring out of the Spirit (Luke 24.49; Acts 1.5; John 14; 16; 20.22).

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[769] The closest that Jürgen Moltmann comes to considering such a reconciliation is when he writes: "If we think about the personal levels, we find - in spite of all dissimilarity - analogous energizing rhythms and fields of force in what goes on in relationships. What is 'between' people on the emotional level is like a field of attraction and repulsion - an order that soothes us and does us good, and a deranging chaos. The reciprocity of an energizing stimulus and irritating sense of derangement frees new energies and awakens unguessed-of vitality; and this inspires life with new forms of expression. Joy in other people can be infectious." Moltmann, p. 275. This connects well with my discussion of how personal presence *affects*. Despite the appeal of the analogy of field here, repulsion and attraction between persons is largely stimulated by intentional agency, with the body and the physical surrounding acting as the form of mediation. Joy can be infectious because a subject has the emotion of joy and expresses it in his physical behaviour.

[770] Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, p.199.

[771] ibid..

2. Brown does refer to the content of the experiences in his second point: "with such phenomena as glossolalia and the power or miracle it is very easy to see how an individual might become very confused as to what was the appropriate account of the experience, personal or impersonal, and why therefore he might opt for what seems the simpler option, the use of non-personal language."[772]

Brown does not pay any attention to the Old Testament evidence relating to the activity of the 'Spirit of God'. The account in Luke-Acts of the Pentecost narrative is very much in the style of presentations of the Spirit (*ruach*) in the Hebrew Bible. Brown has more than just the experiences of Christian disciples to explain.

3. There were also considerable conceptual difficulties, given the cultural assumptions of the time, in making sense of the notion of one person acting from within another. For it was a common assumption in the first century that all persons, including God, existed locally in one place rather than another (In God's case in Heaven).[773]

This is one of the central concerns of my thesis and is not just a conceptual problem for first century people.

4. Brown now draws a distinction between the disciples' interpretation of their perception and the reality of the object of the experiences:

> For they [the events of Pentecost] are felt as impersonal only in the sense that the individual is convinced that the complete explanation cannot be that it is his person that is acting; it feels, as it were, too much like a take-over bid. Thus, descriptions of the experiences as impersonal do not intend exclusion of an ultimate personal explanation, but rather exclusion of a claim that it felt like one of the human agent's own personal actions.[774]

Thus, impersonal language may be used as a way of safeguarding the otherness and transcendence of God. The language of fire and wind functions to indicate that if this is an encounter with a personal being, it is not identical, but something quite other than an experience of a human person - something altogether more powerful and awe-inspiring.

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[772] ibid..
[773] ibid..
[774] ibid., p.200. It will be recalled that in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Brown's view that the Spirit "presses to become subject" was criticised for falling into a Divine Fiat position. Here Brown never defines what he means by 'personal' and 'impersonal', but his language of 'take-over' threatens personal relations.

The experience really is fire-like or wind-like as the metaphors have phenomenological descriptive value.

5. In experiences like the definitive ones comparable accounts suggest that the take-over is so sudden and so complete that the individual is not quite sure what has hit him; it is only subsequent reflection that reveals to him that he must have been related to something. Secondly, irrespective of how it feels, what is accomplished by the take-over is in any case best characterised as personal rather than impersonal; thus even in glossolalia the words are invariably regarded as comprehensible to someone, even if this is not always the agent whose vocal chords are used.[775]

Although personal effects of an event may indicate a personal source, there is no necessary connection.

In summary, Brown shows us that the disciples' immediate interpretation of their experiences might not be the best guide to identifying the personal nature of their Divine source. However, the phenomenological content of their experiences cannot be brushed aside, witnessing as it does to the differences between the nature of God and His creatures. Two options remain if we are not to adopt Brown's view of the Divine "pressing to become subject."[776] The first is to see the injections of the power of the Holy Spirit as described in Acts and elsewhere as episodic. The injections of power are moments which are not endorsed by the human subject prior to their happening, but may be retrospectively sanctioned. Such actions are compatible with human freedom and personal identity precisely because of their episodic nature. They do not deprive the human subject of agency for long enough to threaten his/her personal identity. They are not chosen by the human subject, but neither are they rejected after the event.

The experiences are analogous to sleep. Human beings do not choose, as such, to sleep, and during the period of sleep they are no longer fully conscious. Yet sleep, so the argument goes, does not fatally threaten human subjectivity, and neither ought one to think that the pouring out of the Spirit does. Or again, when I see a very good film, I am drawn into very close empathy with the characters and the action even though I am merely sitting passively in the cinema. I flinch when the shot is fired, and my emotions swell during a

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[775] ibid..
[776] See Chapter 2 above.

particularly moving scene. Yet I am not the Chicago gangster, nor the soldier on Omaha beach, nor St. Francis of Assisi. For a short period of time, my life is enveloped, 'taken-over' by something quite other than me and over which I do not have any power, accept the refusal to be attentive. My identity and freedom are not irreparably damaged by the experience, in fact, the experience may have positively contributed to the development of my character. How much more so would it be in the case of a relationship with a good and loving God.

In response it is clear in Acts and elsewhere in the New Testament that the power of the Spirit is not episodic, but is drawn upon regularly by the disciples during their missionary work. Moreover, it is also clear that reception of the Spirit is a condition of Christian discipleship.[777] Neither is Brown's interpretation of Pentecost as an event where the subjectivities of the Spirit are "taken-over" the only or most intuitive reading of the text. While the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is not episodic for the Christian, moments of special Spirit-filled power are not a permanent state, but do constitute moments of special grace.

A second option is to argue that non-personal descriptions of the content of experiences of the Spirit can in fact be re-interpreted. The language is used as an analogical shield protecting the transcendence of God. Encountering the Spirit is not like experiencing a human being. This is not a 'take-over', but an encounter that is endorsed and welcomed. The people upon whom the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, were Jesus' followers and disciples, who had already been involved in a process of encountering and accepting God in their lives. They are not mere automata of the Spirit, for the text describes the Spirit as 'enabling' them (v.4), not as overpowering them. It is often forgotten that the bulk of the Pentecost event in Acts is taken up by Peter's address to the crowd. It is only after Peter's address to the assembled gathering that large numbers of people are converted. Peter's address may have been enabled or empowered by the Spirit, but it did most definitely involve Peter's subjectivity and did not bypass it. The Divine Fiat view is not the best interpretation of the events of Pentecost.

IV.) Conclusion.

Non-personal metaphors are used of the Spirit for many reasons. Yves Congar has written that the Spirit is "the Person without a face."[778] Unlike the Son, the Spirit is not specifically incarnated and hence no immediate material form of identification may be used to discern the action of the Spirit. Neither is the distinctness and particularity of each of the *hypostaseis* of the Trinity constituted by each having a distinct "personality;" that would be too anthropomorphic. The *hypostaseis* of the Trinity constitute *one being*. The one being of God who has one character in three *hypostaseis*, distinguished according to the triune *taxis* and role in the economy of salvation. Metaphors used to describe the activity of the Spirit, such as wind, fire and breath, although they could be used to refer to God as spirit in general (I John), are pertinent to the Spirit in particular, as their images portray the Spirit's role in the Divine Economy as God's immanent action in the world. The triune *taxis* is revealed by the Incarnation, which means that the principle method of identifying the Spirit is christological.

The self-effacing, mediating role of the Spirit in revealing the Son and the Father is the other key reason for the use of non-personal metaphors. The Spirit's 'face' is that of the Father shining through the Son. It is not arduous to find analogies based on interpersonal human relationships for one person mediating another. Actors and story-tellers portray particular protagonists in a story or drama. Indeed, the Greek word *prosopon* used in early trinitarian formulations, which may be translated as 'person,' originally referred to the 'mask' which actors wore precisely to block out their own specific characters or identities. Storytellers wish their audience to focus on the story being related not their own particular characteristics or mode of communication. To say that an actor or storyteller (or teacher etc.) is "without a face," in the sense of the total bracketing off of their personality, is a nonsense. The good actor and storyteller is the one who channels her activity through her personality. This is not to be egocentrically focused - "Look at me! Pay attention to me!" - but to use the ground of their own personalities to transcend them in the task of mediating the story, or character. In addition, it has been argued in this Chapter that non-personal language used to describe the Spirit may be the result of unthematised experience or also

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[777] Acts 1.5, 11.16, 19.1-7; Gal.3.2; I Cor.14.5, 18.
[778] Congar, Vol.III, p.5.

function as an analogical protective shield against the anthropomorphisms latent in the personal metaphors.

Is there a case for the complementarity of personal and non-personal models or metaphors? With any complementary use of models there has to be a basic level of agreement between the propositions claimed in any model, if coherence is to be sought. After all, the different models are attempting to describe one reality. This is not to argue that the propositional content derived from a model need exhaust the efficacy of the model or metaphor. If the Spirit's nature and action are personal, as has been argued above, then the need for complementary models seems unnecessary. However, non-personal language has real metaphysical import in ensuring the transcendence of God from the clutches of anthropomorphic categories. In sum, non-personal metaphors used of the Spirit can be complementary, standing as a corrective to a too cosy Personalist view, as long as the essential personal nature of the Spirit is not undercut. This is why a 'Personalist' model of the Spirit-human relationship is given primacy.

CHAPTER 7.

SYSTEMATIC CONTEXTUALISATION 1.

THREE THEOLOGICAL LOCI: (I) IMAGE AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY, (II.) CREATION, CONSERVATION, CONCURRENCE AND (III.) PROVIDENCE.

In the next two Chapters a new methodological strategy will be employed, that of "systematic contextualisation." The *generating question* of the thesis is placed within the framework of relevant Christian doctrines. This Chapter will examine three theological loci, and their interrelations, which provide the theological framework of the *generating question*, namely: (I) the intersubjective condition of humankind as an analogy of the relations of the *hypostaseis* of the Trinity; (II) the doctrine of conservation and concurrence; and, (III) the doctrine of providence.

I.) Trinity, Image And Intersubjectivity.

In the Prolegomena, it was noted that the preservation of the particularity of the three Divine *hypostaseis* within the *koinonia* of the Trinity, gave a *prima facie* reason for supposing that God would act towards His creatures in such a way as to preserve the particularity of human freedom and identity. Karl Barth, who in the twentieth century has been one of the key theologians who helped restore the doctrine of the Trinity to its rightful prominence,[779] argued that a Christian conception of the "image of God" must reflect such a trinitarian doctrine of God.[780] It has already been argued in relation to the concept of a *latent true nature*, in Chapter 5 that the "image" ought to be considered in *both* structural and functional or relational terms.

What a conception of the *imago Dei* based on a trinitarian doctrine of God reveals, for Barth, is that there is plurality among creatures, a "being in togetherness." Barth sees the relational aspect of the image evident in Genesis 1:27, where original "togetherness" is as man and wife.[781] In addition, following St. Paul, Barth sees the Christ as the true "image,"

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[779] R.W. Jenson, "Karl Barth", *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian theology in the twentieth century*, Vol.I, edited by David F. Ford (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), p.42.
[780] *Church Dogmatics*, III/1, sc. 41.
[781] ibid., p.184ff.

an image that again reflects analogously the structure of the inner Godhead.[782] Thus, for Barth, such a relational conception of the image is derived both from the relation between the doctrine of the Trinity (God), and Christology (the true image or relation of creature to God). As God *in se* possesses both personal particularity and plurality, so "humanity in its basic form is co-humanity."[783] Equally, given that human existence "is modelled on the human being Jesus, on his being for human companions [Mitmenschen]"[784] so human life is a "being in togetherness," which in its Christian form, is a life with and for others.

It seems quite easy to push this trinitarian analogy too far, as some of Barth's expositors seem to do. For example, Stuart McLean talks of the "basic metaphor of covenant, the I-Thou dyad, present between Father and Son in the Godhead, between God and man [in Christ], and between man and man [in the human community]."[785] Although, one may wish to talk of an analogous I-Thou dyad to that of interpersonal relationships in the relation between the Father and Jesus Christ, nevertheless, if we are to avoid tritheism it is clear that inter-trinitarian relations are not univocally "I-Thou" relations. Neither is the union of the two natures in Christ an "I-Thou" relation. According to the Chalcedonian definition there not two subjects, but one *hypostasis*, "one and the same Son and only-begotten God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ."[786] If we are to appropriate anything from the trinitarian analogy it has to be something more general and restricted, namely, that to be human, and to be, at least partly, in the "image of God," is to embody in some way the trinitarian principles of relation: *perichoresis*, particularity and relationality.[787]

The first systematic contextualisation of the *generating question* of this thesis can be presented: human freedom is not *causa sui*, and although freedom is predicated of a particular person, the nourishment and formation of that person is dependent on an

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[782] "The humanity of Jesus is not merely the repetition and reflection of His divinity, or of God's controlling will; it is the repetition and reflection of God Himself..." *Church Dogmatics*, III/2, p.219).
[783] ibid., p.285.
[784] ibid., p.324.
[785] McLean, p.38.
[786] E.R. Hardy and Cyril Richardson, eds., *Christology of the Later Fathers* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), p. 373.
[787] This may be compared to Colin Gunton's re-appropriation of the Ancient Greek and Mediaeval concept of *transcendentalia* (transcendentals), to refer to those things which can be predicated of all being, both personal and non-personal, given God's role as Creator of the world. *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, pp.129-141. Gunton notes their "extreme generality"(ibid., p.153), and the danger here is that they can be misused and can be opened to 'crypto-ideologies.'

intersubjective environment, of world and community. To refer to the *intersubjectivity* of the human condition is not to presume that this directly mirrors intra-trinitarian relations, only that this is an analogue. The concept of *intersubjectivity* makes reference to the philosophical tradition,[788] and points to the fact that this move of contextualisation is not only to be supported by theological argument. From what might be considered to be the high water mark of epistemic subjectivism, Descartes' *Cogito*, philosophers have tended to argue that the way to avoid the potential solipsism to which Descartes' hyperbolic doubt gives rise, is to recognise that part of the tools which Descartes relies upon to achieve this thought-experiment, such as language, logic and culture, are best explained in terms of intersubjective relations. Both in Analytic philosophy with Wittgenstein's seminal, and much debated, "private language argument," and the birth of the philosophy of language, and in Continental philosophy with a move from a "philosophy of consciousness" to a "standpoint which affirms the primacy of communication,"[789] the intersubjective environment of human existence has been reasserted.

We noted in Chapter 1 that John Oman brought out the association of the dialectical relationship of independence and dependence in a person's relation with moral reality and in the relation of grace-freedom. The moral personality, writes Oman, "knows nothing of will, except as it responds to the attractions of a varied outer world, but it only realises its will by possessing all things and not being under the power of any; it has no ideals except as it seeks the ultimate nature of reality, but it cannot find them till it return and discover them as absolute requirements of its own constitution; it has no knowledge except by going out of itself and forgetting itself in a varied world, but it can garner what it brings back only as its own experience."[790] One needs an ontology that makes room for both an order and integrity of location for any given being and its relation to other orders. Then one will expect that an ontology of persons will also balance the integrity of a person's

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[788] The concept of intersubjectivity is derived from the work of Edmund Husserl who, in his Fifth Meditation of his *Cartesian Meditations*, argued that the world that is the object of our intentionality is not a private world, but an intersubjective world, common and accessible to all. Intersubjectivity is described by reference to our empathy with other persons as fellow subjects, and the process of fitting our expectations of others to the states in which we consider them to be. From this Husserl held that our constitution of the world is not solipsistic. We constitute the world as a shared world, although experienced from the variety of different points of view of the various subjects. Such intersubjectivity constitutes the basis for objectivity and for the reason why our perceptions have to fit the world rather than vice versa.

[789] Peter Dews, "The Paradigm Shift to Communication and the Question of Subjectivity: Reflections on Habermas, Lacan and Mead," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, Vol.49 (1995), pp.483-519.

[790] Oman, p. 65. Compare this with E. Levinas' philosophy below.

identity alongside the significance of the relational order within which a person exists.[791] This is not to concede that relational categories are the only categories on which ontology is constructed, or that in ontology, as some would hold, the category of personhood is primary over that of nature. An adequate account of intersubjectivity cannot be given here for it would have to touch upon language (Wittgenstein), society and culture (Mead), and embodiment (Merleau-Ponty) as areas of intersubjectivity. Instead, how one philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, deals with intersubjectivity in relation to ethics will be touched on to raise some of the import of these issues.

From the standpoint of ethics, Emmanuel Levinas has argued that the intersubjective[792] environment is crucial in the formation of ethical subjects. In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas argues that a supportive intersubjective environment (e.g. the mother) nourishes the person and allows them, through an exercise of autonomy, to establish the self.[793] This nurturing of the self, Levinas describes as "living from"(*vivre de*), whereby the world acts as source of nourishment and enjoyment (*jouissance*) to the developing self. Sensibility is the primary mode of operation.[794] In Levinas' terms this represents a process of the "transmutation of the other into the same,"[795] one of mastery, where otherness is a pleasure to be enjoyed and a satisfaction of one's needs.

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[791] For example, Beth J. Singer follows Justus Buchler's principle of ordinality: "To be is to be an order of traits and a constituent of other orders. It is to be a location of traits, located among the traits of the world." Singer, "Intersubjectivity without subjectivism," p.323. She goes on to argue: "There can be no complex [i.e. ordinal location] without relations. For a trait to obtain, for it to be and be the (discriminable) trait that it is, is for it to be delimited. To be delimited is to be conditioned, environed by limiting and enabling conditions: It is to be located in an order that *provides* for this trait to obtain rather than any other." ibid., p.323. She then applies this ontological conception to the human subject and society, holding together uniqueness and relationality: "The standpoint of the self is always that of a selected perspectival location, a viewpoint, which may be unique to itself, on the situation in which one finds oneself. But there is no developed human being whose inclusive perspective as a person is wholly unique and unshared: Each of us has perspectives that, because of their similarity to those of individual others, enable us to communicate with and to understand those others.... These perspectives unite us in a state of community..." ibid., p.328. The self has the possibility to be unique because it involves, what Singer calls, a "proceptive process, a moving locus of assimilation"(ibid., p. 324), and is a unique complex of traits.

[792] The concept of the "intersubjective" is not a term which Levinas would use to describe the relation between the Self and the Other, because "intersubjectivity" might be suggestive of some interpersonal *system*, in which the Self and the Other stand. As I am less inclined to follow the extremes of Levinas' analysis of the bankruptcy of "ontology," the use of intersubjectivity in my use of Levinas is designed to point out the difference in our approach.

[793] Levinas sets out these conditions for subjectivity in section II of *Totality and Infinity*, entitled "Interiority and Economy", pp.109-180.

[794] Levinas describes it almost as a state of undifferentiated childhood bliss: "One does not know, one lives sensible qualities: the green of these leaves, the red of this sunset." ibid., p.135.

[795] ibid., p. 111. The term "other" in the quotation is in small case to represent the other of the material world, rather than the "Other" (capital case) of s/he who presents the ethical demand.

> The I is, to be sure, happiness, presence at home with itself. But, as sufficiency in its non-sufficiency, it remains in the non-I; it is enjoyment of 'something else,' never of itself. Autochthonous, that is, enrooted in what it is not, it is nevertheless, within this enrootedness, independent and separated.[796]

Without the egocentrism, which is fostered by the Self's initial "enjoyment" of the world, the self would never achieve identity, as Levinas' contention is that wholly dependent beings can result only in fusion or confusion.

However, there is a second movement in Levinas' conception of how the intersubjective is integrally related to the formation of the self. For all the experience of the *jouissance* of a world that affirms and is available to the developing self, disruptive alterity cannot be excluded. The ethical "Other" (*L'Autrui*) who unlike the material other (l'Autre), cannot be subsumed or reduced, "calls in question the naive right of my powers, my glorious spontaneity as a living being."[797] It is precisely this resistance to incorporation into the self's system ("the Same") by the "Other," that overturns any tendency towards solipsistic egoism, and helps to form the self as someone who can encounter and respond to the call and demand of the Other. As Colin Davis puts it:

> The Other puts me into question by revealing to me that my powers and freedom are limited. But the face does not annihilate the self; on the contrary, it is the condition of its separateness. It instigates dialogue, teaching, and hence reason, society and ethics.[798]

Far from simply closing off my freedom, the Other makes possible the investiture of my freedom.[799] Heteronomy justifies an otherwise arbitrary and violent freedom by making it responsible for the Other before a judgement that is chosen neither by the Other, nor by the Self. Moral freedom bestows upon the self, the possibility of praise and blame, of responsibility, of being *subjected* to the demands of the Other. Through it the self's "subjecthood" is formed. It does not violate free will, but rather gives it direction in giving it a task or meaning. Davis again:

> Without the Other, freedom is without purpose or foundation. In the face to face, the Other gives my freedom meaning because I am confronted with real choices between responsibility and obligation towards the Other, or

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[796] ibid., p.143.
[797] ibid., p.84.
[798] Colin Davis, *Emmanuel Levinas: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), pp.49. cf. *Totality and Infinity*, pp.203-4.
[799] *Totality and Infinity*, p.88.

> hatred and violent repudiation. The Other invests me with genuine freedom, and will be beneficiary or victim of how I decide to exercise it.[800]

Norman Wirzba calls this a *metanoia* of autonomous freedom.[801] In encountering the Other, the self of *jouissance* recognises that its attempts at mastery are unjust and re-orientates the self to a new way of existing and being conscious of oneself and the world.[802] In the words of Catherine Chalier, the heteronomy of moral freedom:

> leads to the 'difficult freedom' of one who agrees to be a creature, a creature whose existence answers a calling that is prior to it, a calling which is waiting for its answer.... According to [Franz] Rosenweig creation is the miracle that enables man to listen to the calling of God asking, 'where are you' (Gen.3:9).... The significance of the self -which is a prerequisite of freedom - does not rest in its self-asserting but in its answering the calling that appoints it as unique.[803]

The self, then, does not pre-exist its encounter with its intersubjective environment, but is constituted by it, which means for Levinas the primacy of the ethical demand of the Other in face of which the self is passive, and can only respond. The primordial self-constituting response is, for Levinas, "*Me voici*," which literally means, "here see me,"[804] nothing more than an affirmation of the self in response to the Other. It is of note that for Levinas the concept of "creation," comes to signify both the passivity of heterogeneity and the uniqueness and freedom (autonomy) of beings in their relatedness: "Creation leaves to the creature a trace of dependence, but it is an unparalleled dependence: the dependent being draws from this exceptional dependence, from this relationship, its very independence, its

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[800] Davis, p.49.

[801] See Norman Wirzba, "From Maieutics to Metanoia: Levinas' Understanding of the Philosophical Task," *Man and World*, Vol.28 (1995), pp.129-144. He goes on to say: "The encounter with the Other introduces us to the astonishing adventure called inspired living. The Other invests my freedom, inspires my being, by putting me on a new path of responsibility to a law beyond myself. 'To recognise the Other is to give' (*Totality and Infinity*, p.75)." Wirzba, p.141.

[802] Roland Paul Blum concurs with this description of Levinas: "Encounter with the Other, therefore, is not a question of limiting my pretensions, of circumscribing my primal, 'natural' bailiwick, but of forcing an *essential* change upon me. I am now no longer defined by myself but by the Other. The state of nature cannot be, as in Locke and Hobbes, the theatre of my original isolation to which I can always, in principle, return. There is no return, since I have undergone an essential change." Roland Paul Blum, "Emmanuel Levinas' Theory of Commitment," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol.44, (1983), p.163.

[803] Catherine Chalier, "The Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and the Hebraic Tradition" in *Ethics as First Philosophy*, ed. by A. Peperzak (New York: Routledge, 1995), p.7

[804] Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, p.142. Bernard Waldenfals comments: "This responsibility, beyond any initiative, refers.... to an original passivity, more passive than any passion I can assume; ultimately, it refers to an original corporeality in whose skin I do not feel at home (*Otherwise than Being*, p.108). These are all figures of the Other in me which rules out speaking of the Other without speaking of myself but which exclude even more the possibility that I speak of myself before speaking for the Other. I always come too late to assume my responsibility; so the response of my responsibility precedes every answer given by myself." B.

exteriority to the system"[805] This is precisely the Christian conception of creation, although Levinas' philosophy would never endorse a Christian conception of creation. Moreover, the primacy of the ethical call of the Other, also parallels what shall be further discussed in section III of this Chapter, namely God's calling forth of creation in the light of His prior intent of Self-communication (the doctrine of revelation).

In sum, human freedom and identity is not *causa sui*, but is formed within an intersubjective environment, one which bears some analogy to the dialectic of particularity and relationality within the Trinity. The true functioning of human agency is revealed in the perfect "image of God," Christ, and witnessed to by the Church. One example of a philosophical outworking of an aspect of intersubjectivity to be found in the work of Levinas, characterises the human condition as that of "separation/independence within relation," which is precisely the dynamic to be found, as we shall see in the next section, within a Christian account of creation. However, intersubjectivity remains a contextualising point as regards the *generating question* of the thesis. It does not follow from the fact that human freedom and identity is formed within an intersubjective environment, that freedom is *trans-subjective*, in the sense that another person(s) can intervene directly in my freedom of will to alter the outcome of my willing. Intersubjectivity does not equate to intersubjective *control* of human freedom. In short, intersubjectivity is not a boon for the Divine Fiat view. There is *independence*, integrity of agency, *within* relation; a relative independence or autonomy which cannot be overridden without loss of freedom and identity, however much one's agency is formed and enabled by one's intersubjective environment.

II. Creation, Conservation And Concurrence.

To justify the asymmetry of the Divine-human relationship and to clarify God's relation to His creatures, it is necessary to place the question of human agency within the context of the doctrine of creation and conservation. From the very account of creation in Genesis 1, we see that creation begins with a "formless void" (v.2), but is shaped by a process of *separating* and a *binding together*. As Cornelius Plantinga comments:

Waldenfals, "Response and Responsibility in Levinas" in *Ethics as First Philosophy*, ed. by A. Peperzak (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 45.

[805] *Totality and Infinity*, pp.104 -5.

> God begins to do some creative separating: he separates light from darkness, day from night, water from land, the sea creatures from the land cruiser. .... At the same time God binds things together: he binds humans to the rest of creation as stewards and caretakers of it, to himself as bearers of his image, and to each other as perfect complements.[806]

This not only supports the relevance of intersubjectivity and interdependence,[807] but also provisionally structures our conception of identity. As Miroslav Volf points out:

> The account of creation as 'separating-and-binding' rather than simply 'separating' suggests that 'identity' includes connection, difference, heterogeneity. The human self is formed not through a simple rejection of the other - through a binary logic of opposition and negation - but through a complex process of 'taking in' *and* 'keeping out.' We are who we are not because we are separate from the others who are next to us, but because we are *both* separate *and* connected, *both* distinct *and* related; the boundaries that mark our identities are both barriers and bridges.[808]

The doctrine of creation offers a *prima facie* structure to our conception of identity. Creation is both created ontologically distinct from God, but at the same time dependent upon Him. Within itself creation involves the distinct identities and relative autonomy that comes from the Divine creative separating out of creation, in what Volf calls a process of "differentiation,"[809] and the binding together of creation, in its interdependence and interrelation. This re-enforces the conclusions we have reached hitherto.

The Christian God has traditionally been seen not only as the Creator of heaven and earth, but also as the God without Whose continued act of conservation, preservation and sustenance, there would be no creation: "'For in Him we live and move and have our being.'"[810] This is no watchmaker, as a textbook deist position might hold, whose only action is to wind up the clock and leave it ticking. For traditional Christianity the created order cannot be absolutely separate from the Creator. Scripture testifies to the Divine

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[806] Cornelius Plantinga, *Not the Way it's Supposed to be: a breviary of sin* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995), p. 29.
[807] For a complementary account of creation that stresses the importance of creation as a network of relations of interdependence, see Michael Welker, *Creation and Reality*, trans. J.F. Hoffmeyer (Minnaepolis: Fortress Press, 1999).
[808] Volf, p.66.
[809] ibid, p. 65ff. Volf distinguishes the term "differentiation" from the uncreative and sinful "separating out" and homogenising which is "exclusion": "First, exclusion can entail cutting off the bonds that connect, taking oneself out of the pattern of interdependence and placing oneself in a position of sovereign independence. ..... Second, exclusion can entail erasure of separation, not recognizing the other as someone who in his or her otherness belongs to the pattern of interdependence." ibid., p. 67.
[810] Acts17.28, c.f. Heb.1.3.

Creator and Conserver being causally active in an all-pervasive manner throughout creation.[811] As was remarked above, the human person is not *causa sui.* The free actions of human creatures are no exception to the work of God's all-permeating, constant causal efficacy.[812] By providing a conception of the relation of Divine-human agency at the foundational level of existence, the doctrine of conservation provides an important context for considering Divine-human relations at other levels of agency. It will also be maintained that the doctrine of creation and conservation will help us perceive a pattern in Divine-human relations at all levels of agency.

Following the work of Alfred Freddoso, three theological options arise in relation to the question of Divine conservation: "occasionalism," "mere conservationism," and "concurrentism."[813] *Occasionalism*, a position held among others by al-Ghazali, Gabriel Biel, Nicholas Malebranche and George Berkeley, maintains that God is the sole cause of effects in nature, including human actions.[814] On this position, human creatures do not contribute any causal input as regards the effects of their actions. Human agency does not possess "secondary" causal power. The opposite of occasionalism is, what Freddoso terms, "*mere conservationism.*" Although this position has attracted little support in the history of theology, the 14th century scholar William Durandus being one of the few exceptions, it does have more support in present day theologies that are driven by a respect for scientific realism. Mere conservationism holds that although God may be said to be the Creator and Conserver of all things, this does not involve God being a *direct* and *immediate* cause of an effect brought about by a natural substance. God is responsible for bringing about the causal power of created substances and for preserving that causal power in existence, but not for its exercise. The third and final variation is *concurrentism*, which has attracted by

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[811] For example, see Job 38.25-29; 39-41, Psalm 148.3-10.
[812] Isaiah 26.12; I Cor. 12.6; II Cor. 3.5.

[813] Alfred J. Freddoso outlines and critiques the options in, "God's General Concurrence with Secondary Causes: Pitfalls and Prospects" in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 68 no.2 (1994), pp.131-156. See also A.J. Freddoso, "God's General Concurrence with Secondary Causes: Why Conservation is not enough" in *Philosophical Perspectives, 5, Philosophy of Religion*, ed. by J. E. Tomberlin (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing Co., 1991), pp.553 - 585.
[814] For contemporary discussions of occasionalism see: A.J. Freddoso, "Medieval Aristotelianism and the Case Against Secondary Causation in Nature" in *Divine and Human Action*, ed. by T.V. Morris (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 74 - 118; Steven Nadler, "Occasionalism and General Will in Malebranche" *The Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 31(1993), pp. 31-47; and S. Nadler, "'No Necessary Connection': The Medieval Roots of the occasionalist Roots of Hume" in *The Monist*, Vol. 79 no.3 (1996), pp. 121 - 139.

far the mainstream support in the history of theology and contends that transeunt action (i.e. action resulting in effects external to the agent) is the result of a *concursus*, a coming together of Divine and created causation.

All three options involve apparent contradictions. In the case of occasionalism, setting aside the deeply counterintuitive nature of the theory, it appears to make a distinction between transeunt actions of created substances and non-transeunt action, viz., an action that does not have effects outside the subject. Yet, surely the logic of occasionalism suggests that non-transeunt actions should also fall under the sole causal prerogative of the Divine? If human mental states are the effects exclusively of Divine action, then it follows that human action is strongly determined and creatures have no claim to be morally responsible for their actions. Moreover, the occasionalist position runs into difficulties in relation to the problem of evil, in maintaining a distinction between a God who may permit evil and one who actively causes evil.[815]

"Mere conservationism" attempts to avoid the extreme of deism, while maintaining a biblical conception of Divine conservation and the integrity of direct, created causal efficacy. The position lacks, what Freddoso calls, the 'intuitively appealing principle of symmetry:' "that a created entity depends on God for its coming into existence in exactly the same way it depends on Him for its continuing to exist."[816] Any distinction which is to be made between "direct", "immediate" created causal efficacy and "remote," "indirect" Divine conservation, needs to be carefully drawn if "mere conservationism" is not to slip into concurrentism.[817] Lastly, concurrentism is faced with the *prima facie* contradiction of how two agencies can both causally contribute to one effect, viz. the action of a human agent, or the effect of certain natural substances or events.

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[815] This is the reason Freddoso gives for being sceptical about the prospects of occasionalism: "Aristotelian theists [i.e. concurrentists or mere conservationism] use individual natures as a causal buffer between God and evil. For they claim that God is only a general cause of the effects of secondary causes, and so they can argue with some plausibility that the defectiveness of evil states of affairs (whether they be moral evils or physical evils) is traceable solely to the causal contribution of the secondary or creaturely causes. The no-nature theory [the most plausible version of occasionalism], by contrast, does away with natures, and holds that God is the sole active cause of every state of affairs in nature. So if any such states of affairs are evil or defective, this defectiveness can be traced only to God's causal contribution. But this seems to make God the doer - and not just the permitter - of evil." Freddoso, "Medieval Aristotelianism and the Case Against Secondary Causation in Nature," p.116.

[816] Freddoso, "God's General Concurrence with Secondary Causes," p.568.

[817] The adjectives used to describe mere conservationism in speech marks here are taken from Freddoso's account of mere conservationism. Freddoso, "God's General Concurrence with Secondary Causes", p.554.

There is not the space to discuss all three positions with equal weight. As concurrentism has been by far the best supported theological position over time, and Freddosso and others have given plausible arguments as to why the *prima facie* contradictions of mere conservationism and occasionalism are more intractable than concurrentism, a concurrentist position will be chosen to explicate the doctrine of Divine conservation. Moreover, as all three positions support a doctrine of conservation, in principle they would all lead to the general conclusion of this section, namely, that conservation presents the first level of Divine action in relation to the human, and hence, an important context of the *generating question*. Nonetheless, it is simplest to exhibit this conclusion on a concurrentist position.

I.01) Concurrentism.

To present a coherent position of concurrentism one must address the *prima facie* problems with concurrentism, namely, how two agencies can both causally contribute to a common effect. It is all too easy for a defence of concurrentism to explain this apparent contradiction by saying that one party does X while the other party does Y, and that co-operatively X and Y together produce the desired effect. Surreptitiously this hides the fact that actually X and Y perform two different actions and even produce two distinct effects, which when added together produce what is claimed to be the one common effect. David Griffin holds that:

> [I]f 'sufficient' really means *sufficient*, then the idea of two sufficient causes for one event is clearly self-contradictory. Accordingly, if one holds to divine causation [i.e. concurrentism], then pantheistic monism cannot be consistently avoided[818]

Frank Dilley argues that the result of concurrentism is either a denial of one party's freedom, "mutuality of freedom," or a division of the action and effect, "mutuality of action."

> What is required, however, is that the *same* act be done by two sets of causes operating freely [this is concurrentism]. If God does one part and man the rest, then each is doing part of the act, and they are not both doing the same act at the same time. In addition, to say that God does part of the

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[818] David R. Griffin, "Relativism, Divine Causation, and Biblical Theology" in *God's Activity in the World*, ed. by O.C. Thomas (American Academy of Religion, 1983), p.123.

act would be to say that he does act in nature to 'interfere'.... In short, the dilemma is this: if there is genuine unity of action, two parties doing exactly the same act at the same time, then there is no duality of causes; and if there is duality of causes, then there is no unity of action. The one kind of unity there can be is unity of will, the sharing of a will to the same result, but in such cases each party acts separately, each does his part, but they do not do the same thing.[819]

A reply to such criticisms must commence from an understanding of the uniqueness of the Creator-creature relationship. The Creator-creature relationship does not just fall into another type or genus of natural relationship, such as interpersonal human relations; it is unique and transcends the categorical order of created causation. If God is the Creator, Lord of all and "in Him we live and move and have our being"(Acts 17.28), then our very framework of existence is divinely held in being. As such, it would indeed be presumptuous for creatures to assume that we can grasp our grounding in the Divine. That does not mean that one is left with complete mystery. The very ability to talk or recognise the existence of Divine conservation requires one to have some knowledge of that reality, however preliminary. This is why Kathryn Tanner warns that *concursus* "should first of all not be talked about as concord, a convergence of independent lines of divine and created agencies productive of a single created effect."[820] *Concursus* must be seen from the perspective of Divine conservation of existence in general:

> God's transcendence prohibits talk of God's working with created causality in any way that implies the parity of divine agency and created causality within a common causal nexus or plane. According to the rule for talk of God's agency, God can be said to work with created causes only in the sense that God creatively establishes that causality to have its place within a created order directly established as a whole by God.[821]

The contradiction which Dilley and Griffin perceive is caused by there being two agents, two distinct intentions and even two separate centres of causation.[822] Yet this is to assume that the Divine-human relation in conservation is to be conceived of in a way that places two agents on a level playing field, neglecting the uniqueness and asymmetry of the Creator-creature relationship outlined above. If all action is action under the influence of

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[819] Frank B. Dilley, "Does the 'God Who Acts' Really Act?" in *God's Activity in the World* ed. by O.C. Thomas (U.S.: American Academy of Religion, 1983), pp.56-7.

[820] Kathyrn E. Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp.93.

[821] ibid, p.94.

[822] When Dilley and Griffin bemoan the coherence of concurrentism they presuppose that they have some self-contained valid definition of what constitutes an *action*, which they do not in fact provide.

Divine conservation, then the problematic dualism that Dilley attempts to construct between self-contained human action and Divine action is misconceived.

Griffin holds that a concurrentist position gives rise to the over-determination of positing two *sufficient* conditions for one event. Thomas Aquinas produced an account of primary and secondary causation that can avoid this contradiction. Aquinas distinguishes between God the primary cause, who is the immediate, universal cause of something *being* at all (*esse commune*), and secondary causes, which are created causal powers responsible for the particular and determinative being of the effect, enacted through the power of primary causation.[823] Brian Shanley warns that this distinction does not leave the human agent with an operation that is ever independent of the Divine. Secondary causation is always the action of "moved movers."[824] God is the Creator, but He grants human creatures "the dignity of causing."[825] Human secondary causation is never sufficient in itself, as God conserves existence and hence moves all beings to their actions as the *primum movens non motum*.[826] The Divine primary cause may be thought to be sufficient, in the sense that it is quite possible that an omnipotent God could by Himself alone bring about such an effect. All secondary causation is dependent upon Him. Nevertheless, as part of the Divine condescension of creation, Divine causation permits secondary causation to be a factually *necessary* condition of the production of particular, determinate effects.[827] If some such distinction is accepted between Divine general concurrence and determinate secondary causation, then Griffin's criticism can be appropriately addressed.[828] Freddoso provides

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[823] Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), III, 66. See also, Etienne Gilson, "The Corporeal World and the Efficacy of Second Causes," in *God's Activity in the World*, ed. O.C. Thomas (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), pp. 212 - 227.

[824] He writes: "it must always be remembered that the divine causation of *esse* is ultimately constitutive of every formal perfection in the secondary cause, its causing, and its effect." Brian Shanley, O.P., "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 72 (1998), p.109.

[825] *Summa Theologicae*, I q.22 art.3.

[826] Aquinas, *De Potentia*, III,7. Shanley lays out the logic of Thomas' position as follows: "all finite secondary causes are moved movers..... because nothing moves from potency to act except under the influence of what is already in act. Every created agent.... requires the prior actuality of God as *primum movens* in order to actualize its potentiality to its own proper operations." "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," p.109.

[827] "God lays down necessary causes for effects that he wants to be necessary, and he lays down causes that act contingently - i.e. that can fail of their effect - for the effects he wants to be contingent... The will of God cannot fail: but in spite of that, not all its effects are necessary; some are contingent." Aquinas, *Commentarium in Aristotelis libros peri hermeneias*, I.14.

[828] K. Tanner in her defence of concurrentism draws a distinction between two orders of causal efficacy: "along a 'horizontal' plane, an order of created causes and effects; along a 'vertical' plane, the order whereby God founds the former." *God and Creation in Christian Theology*, p. 89.

common day analogies, such as two people lifting a car, to support the position that "co-operative effects sometimes have features that can be traced back primarily to one or another of the co-operating agents without destroying the unity of the effect."[829]

As regards the first prong of Dilley's concerns, namely, whether *concursus* could combine mutuality with unity of action, Aquinas would maintain that *esse commune* and the determinate *esse* cannot be separated. They are part of one whole.[830] When a human agent intends to, for example, sculpt a piece of alabaster, one cannot separate out the contribution of God and the person, the human intention to sculpt a particular form and the undergirding *esse commune* originating from God. Human causality is experienced as the exercising of real causal power, not the mere provision of mental intentionality. As Shanley writes: "A secondary cause is a real cause acting through its own intrinsic power to produce a commensurate effect, but only insofar as it acts in dependence upon the primary cause (*in virtute primi agentis*)."[831] The effect cannot be divided up, because both the universal and the particular are required to produce the *one* effect. The effects of either the universal or particular cause alone are not factual realities; they are abstractions.

The second prong of Dilley's critique concerns how concurrentism can preserve the freedom of both agents. As neither agent is the sufficient cause of the event,[832] both parties have a causal role in the production of the effect, although Divine causation has an undergirding role. This is so because of the self-effacing intent of God to enable His creation to have relative autonomy.[833] God enables secondary causation of particular

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[829] Freddoso, "God's General Concurrence with Secondary Causes," p.149. In the case of two people lifting a car, the common effect is lifting the car ten inches off the ground, a task that neither person could accomplish on his own: "Yet even if neither of you could have lifted the car so much as an inch off the ground on your own, it still seems natural enough to say that the fact that the left rear part of the car now stands ten inches off the ground - instead of, say, six inches or none at all - is traceable primarily to you as an efficient cause rather than to your friend, and this in virtue of the fact that you are lifting from the left side." ibid. This example is not meant to apply univocally, as the case involves two human agents, not the unique Creator-creature relationship, which on one analysis of the situation would be undertaking two distinct actions, not one.

[830] *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III.70.

[831] Shanley, "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," p.108.

[832] This is given the proviso that in the case of Divine agency this is not a question of lack of power, but the choice of allowing His creatures a role in causation.

[833] A human analogue here might be the case of an anonymous benefactor, who supplies the finance for a student to achieve his university degree. In a sense the student's acquiring the degree is the result of double agency: without the benefactor she would never have been able to study. Nonetheless, the benefactor contributes in a non-self-assertive way laying down no conditions. It is the student's talents that are responsible for passing the degree not the benefactor's.

events, even though this might go against His own character, in the case of a sinful act.[834] In this area, unlike the Divine Fiat view, causation does not equal compulsion. As Aquinas writes: "It is essential to the voluntary act that its principle be within the agent: but it is not necessary that this inward principle be the first principle unmoved by another."[835] To suggest that this denies true freedom to secondary causes, because they can never act independently of Divine conservation, is to set up a false ideal of absolute freedom (*causa sui*) which secondary causes never have. Neither does this augur determinism.

> For just as creation is not a change, so too the divine motion is not the effecting of a change in something with independent existence; divine efficient causation is only a *motio* in an analogous sense. The primary mode of divine efficient causation is creative and constitutive, not controlling and compelling. God is not rival or auxiliary to created causes, but rather the One who makes all causes *be* causes.[836]

There is asymmetry: God is Creator, and creatures cannot dictate the conditions of their facticity. Dilley has not shown that the Divine works against particular, created human freedom and acts as a constraint on human freedom. God does not determine the particular choices that we make, even if He determines the nature of created reality, the set of circumstances and possibilities within which a person can interacts.

I.02) Conclusion: General Concurrence and the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In this section it has been argued that a concurrentist account of the doctrine of conservation is coherent and places the *generating question* of this thesis in one of its theological contexts. Existence as created and conserved by God is, writes Aquinas, "more intimately and profoundly interior to things than anything else."[837] Such an intimacy is something that eludes our grasp, originating as it does from its transcendent source. There is a fundamental distinction and asymmetry between Creator and creature. This helps to provide the context of some of the *limits* of our enquiry.

In one sense, Stump's *intrinsic-extrinsic* distinction is inappropriate to refer to the Divine-human relation. If concurrentism is true, then the doctrine of conservation requires one to hold that God is *intrinsic* to our very being, at work sustaining our existence.

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[834] In this sense, God may be said to permit the existence of evil, but not to will it. Such a tension is to be found in many accounts of the problem of evil.
[835] *Summa Theologiae*, Ia2ae. q.9.art.4.
[836] Shanley, "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," p.105.

> Aquinas explains that only the very cause of an intellectual nature can incline the will from within as a moving cause. Any other kind of moving cause acting on the will would violate its nature and freedom because it would coerce it extrinsically.[838]

At the same time, if we are to hold to the import of the primary-secondary causation distinction, then even though God is the *primary* cause, He allows for a level of causation that may be said to be "*intrinsically*" ours, the "dignity of causing." This is to use the term "intrinsic" to mean that which stems from a persons own intellect and will. This does not *exclude* the integral role of God as Creator and conserver of our being, but safeguards the *integrity* or *dignity* of human agency. Thus, although God is, in the first sense, intrinsic to our being, there is also a sense in which it would be possible for God to violate the intrinsic human agency by contravening the natures of creatures who possess relative autonomy.

At the outset it was questioned whether the doctrine of conservation could provide a pattern of Divine-human relations. The pattern one may suggest is evident in creation with the creative act of the Divine initiating a process of separating and binding, of establishing relative autonomy and distinct identity, alongside heterogeneity, interdependence and a general dependence upon God. The pattern is continued in the relation of primary and secondary causes, which is analogous to the Divine-human relation at the level of soteriology. It was argued above in respect to concurrentism that God's agency was primary, but self-effacing in enabling created reality to integrally participate in the causal process. As David Burrell emphasises: "For the divine agency effects particular actions *through* the proper modality of creatures, as befits the Creator, whose proper effect is the very *existing* of things."[839] Analogously, it has been argued in this thesis that the Spirit-human relation in Christian *metamorphosis*, although *initiated* by the Divine and therefore primarily a result of Divine grace, does not override "the proper modality of creatures," but allows creatures to respond and consent to the process of transformation. What we see, then, is a pattern across different levels of Divine activity, consistent with God's character and intentions towards His creatures.

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[837] *Summa Theologicae* I q.8 art.1
[838] Shanley, "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," p. 113; cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III.88.

There are, however, differences between the nature of *concursus* underlying Divine conservation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Traditional accounts of concurrentism have recognised this by distinguishing between *general* concurrence and *special* concurrence.[840] General concurrence is universal and refers to the work of Divine conservation. Special concurrence, on the other hand, is not universal, but is bestowed upon particular activities, the works of Divine grace, such as the activity of the Spirit in soteriology. Does such a distinction suggest that *special* concurrence is somehow an outworking of *general* concurrence? Certainly the Spirit has traditionally been given a role in creation and in sustaining life as the Divine *ruach* (breath).[841] On the other hand, as Brian Gaybba comments, the Spirit has also a directly personal and soteriological orientation:

> I believe the reason was that 'the Spirit of the Lord' was used as a way of expressing God's action towards God's *people* and *through them* on the world around us. 'The Spirit of the Lord' seems mainly to be a way of describing God's active presence to people. This is instructive because it gives us insight into the 'nature' of the Spirit. Its nature is to be a means of contact between persons, to be a means of unity, an idea developed very fully in Christian times.[842]
>
> It is through the *metamorphosis* of human persons that the Spirit will ultimately sanctify the creatures' world (Rom. 8.21).

The Spirit is therefore involved in both, what would be considered to be, *special* concurrence and *general* concurrence. It seems plausible to suppose that it is only because God is Creator and Conserver of the world, that He is able to save His creatures. In the next Chapter the interconnections between the doctrines of creation and redemption shall be further explored. We should, then, expect a unity in God's action, especially if we are to maintain the constancy of God's character and the omniscience of His intentions. This is why it is possible to hold that there is a similarity of pattern between Divine-human relations in general and special concurrence. Both allow for particular freedom within the

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[839] David B. Burrell, "Divine Action and Human Freedom in the Context of Creation," in *The God Who Acts*, ed. by T.F. Tracy (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), p.106.

[840] See, A.J. Benedetto, "Divine Concurrence," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol.IV, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), pp.125-7. He writes: "Special concurrence is given only with regard to certain kinds of activities. Actual grace is a case of special and supernatural concurrence." ibid., p.125.

[841] Genesis 1.2, Psalm 104.30, Psalm 33.6 and Job 33.4; Luke 8.55. The translation of *ruach* in Genesis 1.2 is a matter of debate. As regards "spirit" as life-force, to "expire" or to "give up one's spirit" is to die (Mtt.27.50).

essential asymmetry of the Creator-creature relation. General concurrence allows for the particular determination of actions by creatures and the "dignity of causing," while remaining dependent on Divine conservation. Likewise, the activity of the Spirit in special concurrence as part of the primary Divine initiative towards humankind works for the *metamorphosis* of the person in a way that safeguards the integrity of human freedom and identity, requiring the real response and consent of the person. This is the pattern of the dialectic between distinction and communion, relative autonomy and dependence.

On the other hand, creation/conservation and salvation are quite different *levels* of operation. As we have seen, in the doctrine of conservation Divine activity sustains existence (*esse commune*), whereas the Spirit's soteriological activity works for human *metamorphosis* in a personal way. The Spirit is described as a 'counsellor', who will 'indwell' or draw alongside the believer, 'teach' them (John 14.15-27) and lead them (Gal.5.16, 25). The Spirit is said to search the hearts of believers and reprove. Scripture also refers to, 'The Spirit said...' (Acts 13.2; 21.11; I Tim.4.1). If the argument of the thesis is correct, this level of God's agency is best conceived of, primarily, on a Personalist model. In contrast, general concurrence can rightly be described in quite *impersonal* terms, as the action of *direct* Divine causation, although, its effects are to uphold personal reality. If this is so, then the "intimacy" of the Divine operation in conservation (causal), is of a different kind from the personal intimacy of soteriology, although how God acts in the world to reveal His personal presence is dependent upon His prior causal sustenance of all things.

If *general* and *special* concurrence refer to two different levels of Divine action, then it cannot be assumed or asserted, as some do,[843] that all questions concerning the place of

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[842] Gaybba, p.10.

[843] I am thinking here of Thomas F. Tracy's and William Hasker's critique of Kathryn Tanner's version of a concurrentist position. See K. Tanner, "Human Freedom, Human Sin, and God the Creator," in *The God Who Acts*. ed. by T.F.Tracy (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), pp.111-135. Tracy argues that Tanner's position undermines the causal efficacy of secondary causes, arguing that Tanner's position asserts that "God is the direct and *total* cause of every finite event." T.F. Tracy, "Divine Action, Created Causes, and Human Freedom," ed. by T.F. Tracy *The God Who Acts* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), p.88. Tanner appears to combine incompatibilism on the horizontal order of created causality, with Divine compatibilism on the vertical plane. For Tracy this means that theological determinism wins out: "Although our free actions do not follow with necessity from the past history of the world, they *do* follow with necessity from God's act of willing that we undertake them. For God's agency necessarily achieves what it wills, and (on this account) God's will includes each of my

human freedom and identity in relation to the Divine may be solved at the level of *general* concurrence or by extension. As we have seen, God's primary causation in conservation upholds human nature and empowers the will, and does not determine a person against her nature or will.[844] For God to do so, to use creaturely causal dependence at the level of conserving existence to act to bring about psychological changes in the person, would negate the very self-imposed boundaries that God has set to ensure the integrity of His creation. As noted above, at one level God's causal power is so intimate to our being that it is, in a sense, *intrinsic* to our being.[845] Yet, that same Divine power establishes the integrity of creaturely existence in such a way that it is possible to talk of an act stemming from an *intrinsic* principle of the human agent, and for that to refer to the agents own intellect and will and no others.[846] In this sense, God can *intervene*, although never in the same way as another created agent. Thus, the internal logic of a concurrentist doctrine of conservation does not legitimise a hard theological determinism or a return to the controlling God of the Divine Fiat view. Rather, the doctrine of g*eneral* concurrence, enacted at the level of causation, has ends that are person-forming. Likewise, but at a different level of operation, the Spirit's activity in the life of the believer, is person-enabling and enhancing, in that (a.) the Spirit works within the created structures of freedom and identity, and (b.) perfects true human particularity by drawing the person towards her eschatological fulfilment.

In summary, special concurrence is not so much an outworking of general concurrence or even vice versa. Both levels of Divine action are an expression of the Divine intention

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choices. If we share the incompatibilist intuition that an action cannot be free if it is necessitated by its causal antecedents in the world, then there appear to be equally compelling reasons to deny that free human actions are necessitated by the divine will"(ibid., p. 94). William Hasker adds to this critique by pointing out the negative consequences of Tanner's approach for the problem of evil. W. Hasker, "God the Creator of Good and Evil?" in T*The God Who Acts*, ed. by F. Tracy (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), p.143.

[844] That there may be a grey area on this point in Aquinas himself, or at the very least Thomist exegesis, is indicated by the fact that two recent commentators classify Aquinas' position as a form of theological determinism. W. Hasker treats Thomism alongside Calvinism "Providence and Evil," pp.91-105. See also T.P. Flint, "Two Accounts of Providence" in *Divine and Human Action: Essays in the Metaphysics of Theism*, ed. by T.V. Morris (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp.147-181.

[845] We noted in Chapter 5 that Stump's account did not make clear whether Divine agency was to be considered *intrinsic* or *extrinsic* to the human personality. I hope the above points offer a clarification.

[846] It is noteworthy that many Thomists do not make this distinction, emphasising God's role in creating and conserving human freedom and neglecting the relationship of Divine and human in soteriology. See for example, Herbert McCabe, "Freedom," in *God Matters* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1987), ch.2. There appears to be a tension in Aquinas himself regarding the nature of Divine determination of the human (see the discussion of Aquinas in relation to Stump in Chapter 5).

from the beginning towards creation. Although special concurrence is rooted in Divine conservation, the specific ends of each level of Divine operation are distinct: existence and salvation. By far the most significant conclusion has been the discernment of a pattern to God's action at these different levels. As God has shown His intention to create beings with distinct identities and to respect the dignity of particular human actions by His general concurrence, we should not be surprised to discover that when God comes to interact with the particular actions of human beings in Christian *metamorphosis*, He should do so in a way that does not override the created structures of our being. At the same time, *metamorphosis* could never happen were it not for relationship with the Divine, the creative Divine initiative upon which we depend and which seeks to lead us to full communion with God and creation.

III.) The Doctrine of Providence.

According to the Scholastic tradition both Catholic and Protestant, what has just been discussed above, namely, *conservatio* and *concursus*, were treated under the doctrine of providence.[847] A third component of the doctrine of providence was sought, which was not principally concerned with existence or nature, but with God's direction, purpose and goal for creation and history, *gubernatio* (steering). Colin Gunton articulates a further traditional distinction that is made:

> General providence is a name for that activity by which God is conceived to hold in being the order of creation: maintaining the order and teleology of the human and non-human realms. By contrast, particular and special providence are ways of speaking of saving or redemptive acts directed to restoring the right order, or, better, directedness of creation.[848]

Recent debate in the philosophy of religion on the subject of providence has primarily been concerned with the issue of Divine foreknowledge and its compatibility with human freedom. Thus, for example, Thomas Flint in his review essay, "Providence and Predestination,"[849] treats the issue of providence solely in this regard, hence substantially

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[847] For an account of the Reformed tradition see B.W. Farley, *The Providence of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988); also Lutheran Orthodoxy in Carl Heinz Ratschow, *Lutherische Dogmatik zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung*, Part II. (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1986); and Christoph Schwöbel's discussion of it in his article, "God, Creation and the Christian Community," in *The Doctrine of Creation*, ed. by C.E. Gunton (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), pp.166-7.

[848] Gunton, *The Triune Creator*, p.176.

[849] T.P. Flint, "Providence and Predestination," in *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, eds. by P.L. Quinn & C. Taliaferro (Oxford, Blackwells, 1997), pp. 569-576. The same approach is taken by William

overlapping with Linda Zagebski's article in the same volume on "Foreknowledge and Human Freedom." Our discussion will focus on *gubernatio*, providence as God's care, provision and direction of His creation.

It has already been seen from our discussion of concurrence that for Aquinas God is the primary cause of existence, of the way creation is ordered and the *manner* or *mode* by which things come about: some necessarily, through necessary causes and others contingently, through contingent causes.[850] Thus, human action is contingent and not necessarily caused, and hence possesses its own relative autonomy and agency.[851] What is meant by "necessity" above may be related to modern physic's shift away from a Newtonian mechanistic paradigm and an understanding of nature as a deterministic "closed system." Only when the physical laws which science generates are interpreted deterministically, as providing unquestionable sufficient conditions for an event, do particular acts of Divine providence appear to be violations of nature.[852] Unless the universe is a closed system where all relevant factors can be calculated, there appears to be a place for both necessity and contingency. This is a dialectic which mirrors that between separating out and binding discussed above.[853] The insights of modern science lead us to

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Hasker in both, "Providence and Evil," pp. 91-105, and, "Providence," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol.7, ed. by Edward Craig, (London/New York: Routledge 1998).

[850] *Summa Theologiae*, I q.19 art.8.

[851] Brian Shanley writes of Aquinas' position: "That God works in each thing according to its own nature is one of the major themes in Aquinas's treatment of divine providence. Aquinas argues that the temporal execution of God's eternal plan is accomplished through the mediation of genuine secondary causation. God's providence does not ride roughshod over secondary causes, but rather works through them This means that divine providence does not squeeze contingency out of the universe but rather provides for contingent causes as the means by which the divine plan is accomplished." Shanley, "Divine Causation and Human Freedom in Aquinas," p.117.

[852] As William Alston argues, "The most we are ever justified in accepting is a law that specifies what will be the outcome of certain conditions *in the absence of any relevant factors other than those specified in the law*." W.P. Alston, "Divine Action, Human Freedom, and the Laws of Nature," in *Quantum Cosmology and the Laws of Nature. Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action*, eds. by R.J. Russell, N. Murphy, and C.J. Ishram (Vatican City State/Berkeley: Vatican Observatory Publications/ Center for Theology and Natural Sciences, 1993), p. 190. He goes on to conclude: "Since the laws we have reason to accept make provision for interference by outside forces unanticipated by the law, it can hardly be claimed that such a law will be violated if a divine outside force intervenes; and hence it can hardly be claimed that such laws imply that God does not intervene, much less imply that this is impossible." ibid.. Steven Crain makes a similar point in arguing against the need to resort to Polkinghorne's search for a specific 'causal joint' in the indeterministic openness of chaotic systems which God influences via a 'top-down' or 'downward' mode of causation S. Crain, "Divine Action in a World Chaos: An Evaluation of John Polkinghorne's Model of Special Divine Action, "in *Faith and Philosophy*, Vol.14 (1997), pp. 41 - 61.

[853] Note that differentiation (separating out) and interdependence/interrelation (binding) are supported by *both* necessity and contingency within creation. If there were no laws of nature what would bind different entities together? We would return to the undifferentiated "formless void" of the first state of creation. Equally, it is difficult to conceive of distinct identities and relative of autonomy of beings were there not

suppose that the world God has made is built upon reliable distributions of undetermined events in probabilistic patterns.[854] The interplay of chance (not uncaused) and necessity, is both at the level of indeterminacy at the microlevel (microbiology) and unpredictability at the macrolevel (evolutionary biology). Natural causality works in a very flexible way (chaos theory, quantum mechanics), as well as a highly repetitive or patterned way (probabilistic laws of nature), to allow for a "structured openness" or "freedom within regularity." It is this interplay that allows for "cosmic creativity" and an "emergent universe."[855] As regards human agency it is precisely the nomological structure of the universe that bestows the reliability and regularity so integral to our decision-making, planning and intentional mental states. Equally it is the openness and flexibility of the world-system that allows human beings to exercise freedom. In fact some see the emergence of consciousness as the ultimate flexible system.[856]

This structured openness of regularity and flexibility that God has created, is also the frame within which God acts. Within the limits set by the probabilistic and lawful structures of God's creation, God's providential action may be considered to affect the course of events in the world by acting at crucial junctures to determine otherwise undetermined events. God's *providentia* actualises particular possibilities or alternatives offered by the world process at particular points, in a way that is pro-active and re-active.[857]

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some degree of contingency. Again, we would return to a state where there may be distinct entities, but the homogeneity of hard determinism.

[854] Keith Ward, *Divine Action* (London, Collins, 1990); Arthur Peacocke, *Creation and the World of Science* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979); *Theology for a Scientific Age*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); John Polkinghorne, *One World: The Interaction of Science and Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); *Science and Providence: God's Interaction with the World* (Boston: Shambhala Publications 1989).

[855] "The mutual interplay of chance and law, the operation of chance in a law-like framework, is creative. It is the combination of the two that allows new forms to emerge. On the one hand, if all were law-like and regular, then the system would be ossified. It would always repeat itself. On the other hand, if all were chance, then we would have chaos.... It is chance and law *together* that produce a universe in which new forms emerge, a universe that has creativity built into it." A. Peacocke, "Theology and Science Today," in *Cosmos as Creation*, ed. by Ted Peters. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), p. 39.

[856] Polkinghorne, *Science and Providence*, pp.28-31, 33-34.

[857] For a complementary analogy, which envisages God as actualising particular possibilities within a range of possibilities given by the world-system, Niels Gregersen has recently suggested utilising autopoietic processes. An autopoietic process refers to a self-organising or producing system, like a cell for example, which has a considerable degree of 'autonomy,' and the capacity to creatively adapt to their environment, through selective interaction (link to complexity theory). Employing Fred Dretske's distinction between triggering and structuring causes, Gregersen argues that according to the analogy, "God does not do anything that replaces the ordinary operations of nature. The workings of nature would still be the only triggering causes (like the Thomist concept of secondary causes). God is rather the underlying causality that enables the creatures to trigger themselves forth in their given setting...Working as a structuring cause, God is seen as

> God may work within the probabilistic structure of physical laws set to select a set of paths which would not necessarily have eventuated by physical laws alone, though the possibility of such a path exists in the natural world. Thus God could act within the natural world, intentionally bringing about a particular future.[858]

It is important to see that there are self-imposed constraints to Divine action by the very act of creating such a world. Although God establishes the structures of the universe and conserves them in existence, if they are to remain as a relatively autonomous system, then God must not act so frequently as to alter the probability-pattern of their structure.[859] Some theologians and scientists would want to go further and argue for the specific location of the "causal joint" of Divine action in the world.[860] Others hold that these theories might be useful at an analogical level, but if one maintains that God is the transcendent Creator of the world, then the 'causal joint' is at a metaphysical level and need not to be sort in the physical arena.[861] The latter approach is adopted here.

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reshaping the possibilities as history goes along, by acting in different ways in different contexts, in analogy to other mental events." N. Gregersen, "The Idea of Creation and the Theory of Autopoietic Processes," *Zygon*, Vol.33 (1998), p.359. Unlike Wards proposal above in which the natural laws constrain God's activity, Gregersen's model proposes that, "God may change the constraints themselves at many different levels in and between autpoietic systems." ibid., p.361. Gregersen concludes, "God may thus work simultaneously on different levels of reality by opening (in-formating) or by constraining (or ex-formating) their possibility spectra. Hereby, probability rates are raised for some pathways rather than for others." ibid..

[858] Ward, *Divine Action*, p.120.

[859] ibid., Ch.8: "The Constraints of Creation."

[860] These range from a conception of Divine action working holistically, in the manner of "top-down" or "whole-part" causation, of God interacting with the state of the universe as a whole (A.R. Peacocke, "God's Interaction with the World: The Implications of Deterministic 'Chaos' and of Interconnected and Interdependent Complexity," in *Chaos and Complexity: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action*. eds. by R.J. Russell, N. Murphy, and A.R. Peacocke [Vatican City/Berkley: The Center for Theology and Natural Sciences/Vatican Observatory, 1995], pp. 263-287; and Peacocke, *Theology for a Scientific Age*), to "downward" causation on chaotic systems, at the level of events, via "information" input (John C. Polkinghorne, "The Metaphysics of Divine Action," in *Chaos and Complexity*, pp.147 - 150; *Science and Providence*, ch.2.), and Divine action at the quantum level (Nancey Murphy, "Divine Action in the Natural Order: Burridan's Ass and Schrödinger's Cat," in *Chaos and Complexity*, pp. 325 - 357; Thomas F. Tracy, "Particular Providence and the God of the Gaps," in ibid., pp. 289 - 324.; Robert J. Russell, "Does 'the God who Acts' Really Act? New Approaches to Divine Action in Light of Science," *Theology Today*, Vol.54 [1997], pp.43-65).

[861] "The alternative is to recognize that because the divine act of creation itself is not a physical act, i.e., one that presupposes pre-existing material, but rather a bringing forth *ex nihilo* of all that exists outside of God, then the causal joint between God and the world is *metaphysical* in nature, located 'behind' or 'under' the physical world open to scientific investigation." Crain, "Divine Action in a World Chaos," p.57. See also Austin Farrer, *Faith and Speculation: an essay in philosophical theology* (New York: New York University Press, 1967); Denis Edwards, "Discovery of Chaos and the Retrieval of the Trinity," in *Chaos and Complexity*, eds. by R.J. Russell, N. Murphy, A.R. Peacocke, pp. 157 - 175.

IV.) Conclusion.

The three dogmatic loci of this Chapter have begun to place the *generating question* of this thesis in its proper context. Human freedom and identity is never self-sufficient (*causa sui*), but constituted within a relational context, dependent on Divine creation and concurrence, and upon the intersubjective environment of creation. This order of identity within relation, particularity within plurality, is an analogue, in a weak sense, to the structure of the trinitarian relations of God. As God is Almighty Creator and Conserver, Divine and human agency can never be assessed on the same scale or as competing agents. Nonetheless, the issue of human freedom and identity may still be raised given what is revealed of the Divine intention for creation. The three dogmatic loci directly strengthen the Personalist model of this thesis by revealing a *pattern* of Divine action, across the loci, which is consonant with the model. Although creatures are dependent upon the Divine and interdependent with the rest of creation, God grants them a relative autonomy that is maintained both through Divine conservation and subsequently through Divine action in providence, and conversion, regeneration and sanctification. It is a dialectic of distinctness and communion, relative autonomy and dependence, that has its analogical source within the structural dynamic of the Trinity, and is evident in God's intentions and actions towards His creation.

CHAPTER 8.

SYSTEMATIC CONTEXTUALISATION 2: (I.) THE DOCTRINE OF REVELATION: ON RELATING THE DOCTRINES OF CREATION AND REDEMPTION; (II) COVENANT, FREEDOM AND IDENTITY.

I.) The Doctrine of Revelation.

The third application of systematic contextualisation to the *generating* question of this thesis is to place our subject matter within the overarching framework of the Divine intent or purpose of creating. Substantial knowledge of the Divine intent, Christian theology holds, is something that is revealed. Special Revelation, God's revelation *ephapax* in the Incarnation, has been described by two great theologians of the twentieth century, Barth and Rahner, as a form of "self-revelation" (*Selbstoffenbarung*) or "self-communication" (*Selbstmitteilung*).[862] The framing context of the *generating* question is, then, the doctrine of revelation. Karl Rahner articulates his concept:

> God wishes to communicate himself, to pour forth the love which he himself is. That is the first and last of his real plans and hence of his real world too. Everything else exists so that this one thing might be: the eternal miracle of infinite love.[863]

In doing so he connects the doctrines of creation and redemption, for "the self-communication of God is always first in God's intention, creation and incarnation are not 'two disparate, adjacent acts of God...but are two moments or phases' in the single process of God's self-gift to man."[864] In pursuing this theme in my contextualising strategy, Rahner's theology acts as a source of inspiration, rather than a prescription.[865] From Rahner two principles shall be distilled and expounded, what one may call the 'grammar'

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[862] Despite the many methodological differences between Barth and Rahner, Christoph Schwöbel argues that in relation to the concepts of "Self-revelation"(Barth) and "Self-communication"(Rahner) there is some convergence: "Bei Barth wie bei Rahner ergibt sich die Stellung der Trinitätslehre aus dem Ansatz bei der Offenbarung, die streng als Selbstoffenbarung bzw. Selbstmitteilung gedacht werden muss." C. Schwöbel, "Trinitätslehre als Ramentheorie des christlichen Glaubens," *Marburger Jahrbuch Theologie X* (Marburg: N.G. Elwert Verlag, 1998), p.133.

[863] K. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 3, trans. K. H. and B. Kruger (London: Darton, Longman & Todd/New York: Seabury/Crossroad, 1961-91).p.310.

[864] Anne Carr, "Theology and Experience in the Thought of Karl Rahner" *The Journal of Religion* Vol. 53 (1973), pp.366. The quote in this passage from Carr is from Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 5, trans. by Karl H. Kruger, pp. 177-78.

[865] Half a Chapter would be no place to do justice to Rahner's discussion of grace and nature, "pneumatology" or the status of the human creature, all of which are far from exegetically straightforward to expound or uncontroversial in outcome. George Vass shows how Rahner's concept of the "supernatural existential" alters significantly as his work develops. G. Vass, *The Mystery of Man and the Foundations of a Theological System.* Volume 2 (London/Westminster: Sheed & Ward/Christian Classics, 1985), pp.67-83.

of Rahner's approach.[866] The two principles, which can be detached from Rahner's own particular arguments for supporting them, to wit his Transcendental Thomism, are as follows.

1.) The doctrine of revelation is the overarching framework of creation and the gracious activity of God towards His creatures, in redemption.

2.) A minimal form of Rahner's transcendental postulate: for Divine self-communication to be effective, there must be certain conditions of the possibility of receiving Divine communication on the part of the recipients.[867]

I.01) Principle I: The Unity of the Doctrines of Redemption and Creation.

Rahner arrives at the principle of the unity of the doctrines of redemption and creation in relation to the doctrine of grace by critiquing the Neo-Scholastic position, to be found in early 20th century Roman Catholic "manual theology." Before we trace Rahner's argument it may be worth noting that recent theologians of the grace-nature debate,[868] very much in the wake of Rahner's work, have argued that the fracture between creation and redemption in the doctrine of grace is to be found within the theology of the founder of the "form and content" of the discussion,[869] Augustine of Hippo. J.A. Carpenter's thesis is that Augustine contended that grace relates to the "cure" and restitution of human nature (redemption), and not to "the constitution" of that nature (creation).[870] In Augustine's mature work, *The City of God*, we have a conception of grace "deserting" Adam and Eve at the Fall.[871] In

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[866] Lee Yearley holds that Rahner himself is in the business not so much of presenting a hard and fast solution to the grace-nature debate, but of advancing a correct grammar: "Indeed, one might even argue - perhaps particularly in regard to the question of nature and grace - that his [Rahner's] writings often represent not so much a definite position as a way of approaching a problem which keeps all the necessary factors both in focus and in some kind of relation to each other." L. H. Yearley, "Karl Rahner on the Relation of Nature and Grace," *Canadian Journal of Theology*, Vol.16 (1970), p.221 cf. R.R. Reno *The Ordinary Transformed: Karl Rahner and the Christian Vision of Transcendence* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995), p.120.

[867] Rahner expresses the principle succinctly as: 'God can reveal only what man can hear.' *Hearers of the Word*, rev. J.B. Metz, trans. by Ronald Walls (London: Sheed & Ward, 1969), p. 115

[868] See, James Carpenter, *Nature and Grace. Towards an integral perspective* (New York: Crossroads, 1988); D. Lyle Dabney, "Nature Dis-graced and Grace De-Natured: The Problematic of the Augustinian Doctrine of Grace for Contemporary Theology," *Journal for Christian Theological Research*, Vol. 5 (Internet Publication, 2000).

[869] Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol.1: The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p.293.

[870] Among other texts to support this view he cites Augustine's *On Nature and Grace*, 12. Lyle Dabney puts the above in the following way: "in the theology of the Bishop of Hippo, one might say, nature suffered 'dis-grace' and grace was correspondingly 'de-natured.'" "Nature Dis-graced and Grace De-Natured," Sc.6.

[871] Augustine, *The City of God*, XIII, 13, 24, quoted in Dabney, "Nature Dis-graced and Grace De-Natured." Carpenter writes: "For Augustine, grace above all else is the grace of redemption. His theology of grace is developed almost entirely in terms of sin and the recalcitrant human will. The operation of grace is limited to

comparison, Carpenter argues that the Eastern tradition has a more balanced conception of grace and nature, redemption and creation: "grace was unitary, continuous, and universal."[872] For eastern theologians God does not act from outside of nature, but through and within creation. Augustinian scholars may wish to question some of these generalisations,[873] but my point here is merely to suggest the possible extent of the divorce between the doctrines of creation and redemption in relation to the grace-nature debate in the history of theology.

The framework of Rahner's discussion is much more parochial, namely his critique of what he terms the "extrinsicism" of the Neo-Scholastic position. For Rahner "extrinsicism" stands for a position that regards grace as an elevation of the substance of human nature.[874] Nature and grace on this view are seen as distinct entities, the former arising from creation, and the latter from the supernatural action of God upon the

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human consciousness, to the realm of the spirit. Grace is inapplicable to the exterior circumstances of life, to its constitution; it is an interior reality, operating in the personal dimension of life and effectively nowhere else." Carpenter, p.3. Augustine can appreciate the beauty and order of God's creation, but fails to connect such intuitions with his assessment of Christian anthropology. ibid., p.4. This is combined with what Carpenter calls Augustine's "emphasis on interiority", that "Grace is the gift of the Spirit to the *inner* man." ibid., p.5 cf. Augustine, On *the Spirit and the Letter*, v.36. This stance coupled with Augustine's soul-body dualism, prevented him from seeing the possibility of creation being graced, and hence being a form of the mediation of grace: "It is a curious fact that he who gave the Western church such an intensely corporate understanding of itself as the many in the one and devised the conception of the city of God as a social reality through and through, a body united in a common allegiance and love, at the same time set forth a view of grace that privatized it and virtually limited its operation to the conscious mind - to individuals who had reached sufficient awareness 'to delight in, to love, and to cleave to God'. Here again inconsistency inevitably arose when he came to speak of the grace of infant baptism, to say nothing of his deliverances on the irresistibility of grace in respect to those elected to salvation. Grace here is a coercive force, something operating without regard for consciousness." ibid., p.6.

[872] Carpenter, p.18.

[873] For example, one may question whether this view really integrates Augustine's thinking on love, and even Lyle Dabney wishes to argue for a development in Augustine's thought, from the early focus on knowledge leading to the *vita beata*, which "knew no disjunction indeed, barely acknowledged a differentiation between nature and grace," and a later theology centred on the doctrine of grace, which in the wake of Pelagianism, rested on "an explicit denial of grace to nature, thus placing salvation in effect over and against creation." "Nature Dis-graced and Grace De-Natured," Sc. 16, 31. What we probably have in Augustine's position are a series of tensions, even contradictions. Lyle Dabney highlights one when he draws our attention to the fact that ,"The created world is, for [Augustine], good both as to its origin and its proper end, and itself knows no 'fall,'" yet, when it comes to "the religious and ethical life of human beings" human nature is "dis-graced." ibid., sc.33.

[874] On this position, grace cannot be experienced, since the entitative elevation that makes it supernatural cannot be known. See K. Rahner, "Nature and Grace", *Theological Investigations*, Vol. IV, trans. by Kevin Smyth, pp.175, and, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace", *Theological Investigations*, Vol.I, trans. Cornelius Ernst, p.329ff.

creature.[875] Rahner's principle systematic criticism of "extrinsicism" is that it makes the "supernatural" appear secondary and abstract to ordinary life. Rahner writes:

> Supernatural 'enlightenment', moral 'impulse' and 'inspiration' to good acts, the 'light of faith,' the 'breath of the Spirit' and other similar concepts from Scripture and tradition (the unction, the signing of the Spirit), are reduced either to this purely entitative elevation of our natural moral acts, or to a natural influence of a psychological type - which is however considered to be providentially directed to our supernatural salvation. In a word, the relationship between nature and grace is conceived in such a way that they appear as two layers so carefully placed that they penetrate each other as little as possible.[876]

Extrinsicism has the unpalatable consequence that either the created is usurped by the supernatural, or the created remains untransformed, whereby grace does not really penetrate nature. It also separates creation on the one hand, and redemption and consummation on the other. As Reno remarks, "though we are quite obviously related to God as creator, for the extrinsicist, we are externally related to God as redeemer and consummator."[877] Further, within the doctrine of redemption itself, grace and the Incarnation remain unconnected.

The essential skeleton of Rahner's response is to fasten back together again the doctrines of redemption and creation, underpinned by the reality of the Divine intent of Self-communication. Hence, (i.) the act and form of creation is shaped by the Divine intent, and, (ii.) God is actively present to human nature and created existence from the beginning as the God who intends Self-communication. Thus, in some telling phrases Rahner writes: "the goal [i.e. the Self-communication of God] itself is also the very power of the movement [i.e. the movement of creatures towards the Divine]"[878] and "in grace the spirit [i.e. the human spirit] moves within its goal."[879] Rahner sums up his position:

> The term 'self-communication' is really intended to signify that God in his most proper reality makes himself the innermost constitutive element of man. We are dealing, then, with an *ontological* self-communication of God. However, this term 'ontological'..... should not be understood merely in an objectivistic sense, objectified and reified, as it were. A self-

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[875] R. R. Reno has given "extrinsicism" the following formula, where P is the human creature or nature and Q is God's loving self-communicating: "A relation is external if P is related to Q in such a way that if P were not related to Q, then P would still be P." Reno, p.121.

[876] *Theological Investigations*, Vol.IV, p.167.

[877] Reno, p.122.

[878] *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, p.130 content of the brackets is my exegesis.

[879] ibid.

> communication of God as personal and absolute mystery to man a being of transcendence signifies from the outset a communication to man as a spiritual and personal being. First of all, then, we want to avoid both misunderstandings, that of mere word *about* God, although perhaps spoken by God, as well as that of a self-communication of God which is reified and understood entirely after the manner of a thing.[880]

If one distances oneself from Rahner's adoption of the post-Tridentine technical framework,[881] and substitutes the concept of "uncreated grace" in favour of the biblical language of activity of the Spirit,[882] the presence of the Spirit will be seen as part of the human condition from the beginning and not as an afterthought.[883] The structure and main thrust of Rahner's discussion, can therefore lead to re-enforcing a Personalist model of the Spirit-human relationship, by setting the model within the context of God's personal offer and presence to His creation. The human *condition* is understood in the light of the Divine intent, offer and presence, rather than from a grace-nature debate couched in substantialist[884] and causal terms.[885] The overall strategy of contextualising remains the same:

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[880] ibid., p.116.

[881] William Shepherd points out the tension embodied in Rahner's utilisation of such a framework: "Much of Rahner's own theology strives to point out such incompatible divisions in the ordinary [Roman Catholic] theological handbooks. A good example....is the divorce of a natural theological concept of God from the revealed trinitarian notion. .... But, at the same time, Rahner's own theology is disjointed. He adheres on one side to a restricted concept of the problem of nature and grace - this problem arises within a traditional, post-Tridentine framework of thought. On the other side, he achieves a fully developed system which ought to be construed as a 'theology of nature and grace' in an extended but appropriate sense - this enterprise is conceived and carried out within the context of a modern, non-static, unified, historical, evolving view of the universe.....Rahner's occasionalistic handling of the technical doctrine of nature and grace, and his willingness to treat it in terms drawn from the traditional hierarchical, static, layered view of the world, need to be overcome." W. Shepherd, *Man's Condition. God and the World Process* (New York, Herder & Herder, 1969), p.25.

[882] I would support Rahner's prioritisation of "uncreated grace" over "created grace" argued in "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," *Theological Investigations*, Vol.I, but find the continued employment of such terminology unhelpful. From a biblical perspective John Muddiman remarks: "The whole debate about the doctrine of grace, whether conducted in Greek or Latin, could be said to be built on such mistranslation. For grace in the New Testament (*charis*, *gratia*) takes its sense from the Jewish tradition; it is the elective favour of God, essentially corporate and historical. It has little or nothing to do with individual conversion or sanctification, with 'means of grace' or divine assistance for the frailty of the human will. When and if such ideas appear, they are denoted by 'the Holy Spirit poured into the heart', which is spoken of far more frequently in New Testament in this way than as a separate person of the Godhead." J. Muddiman, "The New Testament in theology," in *Companion Encyclopaedia of Theology*, eds. by P. Byrne & L. Houlden (London: Routledge, 1995), p.114.

[883] Kenneth Eberhard defines Rahner's concept of "supernatural existential" as ultimately: "man's 'situation' within this offer [of Divine self-communication]: an offer which effects him ontologically and intrinsically because it affects his preconcept by which he performs very act of knowing and willing." Kenneth Eberhard, "Karl Rahner and the Supernatural Existential," *Thought*, Vol.44 (1971), p. 555.

[884] William Shepherd argues that Rahner's final position of seeing concrete nature as a mixture of *natura pura* plus the "supernatural existential," perpetuates the Scholastic shortcoming of conceiving the grace-nature debate in substantialist terms: "It fails to make clear that the supernatural existential is not merely a

> If, then, there is nevertheless to be an immediacy of God to us, if we are to find him in his own self here where we are in our categorical world of time and space, then this immediacy both in itself and in its categorical, historical objectification must be *embedded in this world to begin with.*[886]

This does not mean, as some critics of Rahner have supposed,[887] that grace is *necessarily* offered to humankind, that the Spirit is necessarily present to us, or that "nature" by its own means has some intrinsic access to the divine. Graced creation is precisely that, graced, freely willed.

One of the consequences of this position is that the *context* of the Spirit's activity in Christian *metamorphosis* is not an aberration of the natural order, nor a disruption of human freedom and identity. Rahner comments that his theology gives a new meaning to the theological weasel word, "Divine intervention," which usually implies action *ad extra.*

> A special 'intervention' of God, therefore, can only be understood as the historical concreteness of the transcendental self-communication of God which is already intrinsic to the concrete world. Such an 'intervention' of God always takes place, first of all, from out of the fundamental openness of finite matter and of a biological system towards spirit and its history, and, secondly, from out of the openness of the spirit towards the history of the transcendental relationship between God and the created person in their mutual freedom. Consequently, every real intervention of God in the world, although it is free and cannot be deduced, is always only the becoming historical and becoming concrete of that 'intervention' in which God as the

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component in man's being, as, indeed, Rahner's technical doctrine of nature and grace seems to imply. If man's being is all that is involved, then the supernatural existential appears to be nothing other than a piece of human equipment. Instead it should be emphasized that the supernatural existential refers to the mode of God's activity towards man." Shepherd, p.256. This is why Shepherd makes a distinction between the "supernatural existential" as "modal" elevation rather than an "entitative" one. Ibid., p. 252. By "modal" I take it that he intends to refer to the way or manner that the human condition is elevated. "Thus the *human condition* as a whole is the point of concentration, and it is really this that is complex and structured, both natural in itself and supernatural in the aspect of God's presence to it in uncreated grace. As a *complex* whole, the created world process is modally supernatural, though not entitatively supernatural." ibid.. Reno, in contrast, holds that Rahner refashions the central theological concepts of "essence" and "substance" in a constructive and novel manner. Reno, p. 127ff..

[885] George Vass questions whether, what he calls, the "bastard category of quasi-formal cause" can really: "express that personal encounter between God and man which is presupposed by God's presence as grace? Can it express that love between God and man which is the culmination of engracement?" *The Mystery of Man and the Foundations of a Theological System.* Vol. 2, p.109. On the one hand, Rahner wishes to speak of God's self-communication and personal presence, on the other hand he reverts to an abstract and archaic concept of causation.

[886] *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, pp.86-7 (my *italics*).

[887] For example, Paul Molnar argues that the positing of Rahner of a receptivity towards the Divine offer of self-communication represents a form of *'mutual conditioning'*, "rejected by the tradition in the interest of maintaining God's freedom and self-sufficiency." Paul Molnar, "Can we know God directly? Rahner's solution from experience," *Theological Studies* Vol. 46 (1985), p. 244n72.

> transcendental ground of the world has from the outset embedded himself in the world as its self-communicating ground.[888]

This passage comes from a section entitled, "God's Activity in and Through Secondary Causes," which shows us that Rahner is thinking along similar lines to the systematic connection made in our previous Chapter, between *general* concurrence and *special* concurrence. God is "embedded in this world to begin with," not only as the causal power that creates and sustains existence, but also as the Divine personal presence whose intent to enter into self-communication shapes creation, and hence the nature of human identity.[889] In this light, the supernatural and natural, the Divine and the human, cannot be separated or siphoned off into two closed realms, they are always in relationship. The human is continually shaped by the Divine, even in the decision to reject God.

Finally, it is worth noting that Rahner makes an additional systematic link between the doctrines of creation, grace and Christology. Creation is seen as an evolutionary movement of grace, which reaches its "high point," though not its end, in the life of Jesus Christ. For Rahner, the hypostatic union in Jesus Christ is the objectification of the fact that God has freely willed from the beginning of creation the relation of the "two natures," Divine and created. In short, the hypostatic union in Christ is analogous to the relationship of grace and nature, the transcendental experience to be found in all.[890] Anne Carr perceives a "hermeneutical (or theological) circle" in Rahner's theology, whereby he moves from ontology/anthropology to Christology and other Christian doctrines and back again:

> If man is essentially spirit, open to the self-communication of God through revelation, incarnation, and grace, then these moments of the single mystery of Christianity are at once - dialectically - anthropocentric and theocentric. Human experience, both as transcendental, ungraspable mystery and as objective, conceptual reflection of that reality, finds its meaning and explanation in Christian revelation. Conversely, the truths of Christianity,

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[888] *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, p.87.

[889] As Michael Buckley writes, for Rahner our dependence on God radically shapes our conception of human autonomy: "To be a creature....refers fundamentally to an absolute and unique relationship of utter dependence, unlike any other in my experience: The total dependence upon Mystery as upon the context of reality which gives direction to the movement of inquiry and establishes the freedom of choice and personal responsibility." M. Buckley, "Within the Holy Mystery," in *A World of Grace: An Introduction to the Themes and Foundations of Karl Rahner's Theology*, ed. L.J. O'Donovann (New York: Crossroads, 1980), pp. 45, 46.

[890] "Grace in all of us and hypostatic union in the one Jesus Christ can only be considered together, and as one reality they signify the one free decision of God for the supernatural order of salvation, for his self-communication." *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, p. 201.

> especially the core truth of the self-communication of God, transforms human experience.[891]

The connection between Christology and grace reveals a similar theological pattern of Divine-human relations. However, a systematic pattern or analogy does not in and of itself resolve the distinct problems which confront both the Christology and grace-freedom debate, as has been pointed out in Chapter 1 regarding the theology of D.M. Baillie. It is difficult to see how the revealing of a pattern alone will properly address the problem set out in the *generating question* of this thesis.

In sum, the "ground" and "horizon" of our being, which Rahner talks about, is none other than the personal presence of God, a presence which God wishes to communicate to His world from the point of creation. As Rahner's Transcendental Thomism is not being appropriated, this general conclusion is compatible with the Personalist model put forward.[892] What Rahner argues for is a more fundamental level of *concursus* over and above that of *general* concurrence, namely, the fact that God's offer of Self-communication and hence His presence is graciously *concurrent* with human existence, shaping it, but not strongly determining it.[893] As our strategy in this Chapter is that of systematic contextualisation, the conclusions drawn *qualify* rather than solve the *generating* question, just as the doctrine of *general* concurrence was found to do in the last Chapter. The fact that the Divine intent of 'Self-communication' is "embedded in this world to begin with" leaves open the question of *how* the Divine may wish to communicate Himself and whether that is compatible with human freedom and identity.

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[891] Carr, "Theology and Experience," p. 371.

[892] It is not at all clear whether Rahner's Transcendental Thomism is compatible with a Personalist model, as he describes the infinite, unthematic horizon, "the Mystery," of transcendental experience in fairly impersonal terms. This has led Paul W. Newman to argue that Rahner, among other recent theologians, is in danger of collapsing the Spirit of God into the human spirit, so threatening the distinction between Creator and creature and opening up the danger of pantheism. Newman, pp. 415-426. Newman is not the only person who has problems with Rahner at this point, so do William Hill in, "Uncreated Grace - A Critique of Karl Rahner", *Thomist*, Vol.27 (1963), pp. 333-356, and Molnar pp.228-61, not to mention Rahner's many German critics. It may equally be said that Rahner does not have a developed pneumatology. He most commonly talks of the Spirit in terms of religious (transcendental) experience and grace. Michael Welker comments on *Theological Investigations* volumes 16 and 17: "With regard to a substantive pneumatology, these volumes are astonishingly devoid of insight." *God the Spirit*, p. 280 n.2.

[893] Shepherd also appears to agree that the fruit of Rahner's handling of the grace-nature debate is a rediscovery of the importance of the concept of *concursus*: "To phrase the matter in traditional terms: grace on the new account suggested above is more *concursus dei* than it is *auxilium speciale*, mostly because no distinction is made between the orders of creation and redemption. Instead the new doctrine of nature and grace insists on position that only one single order exists, developmentally directed toward God's final

Unfortunately, some of Rahner's commentators fail to make this distinction, assuming that just because God's agency is *concurrent* with His creatures somehow this solves all the difficulties of the Divine-human relationship.[894] The effect of applying Rahner's first principle is, therefore, to *qualify* and contextualise the *generating question* of this thesis.

I.02) Principle II: The Presupposition of Divine Self-Communication.

The second principle, which we have distilled from Rahner, maintains that the Divine intent of Self-communication presupposes, on the logic of interpersonal relationships, creatures that are capable of *receiving* this communication and love. This idea of creaturely receptivity is to be found in the Scholastic concept of *potentia obedientialis*, which Rahner describes as having "an inner ordination" or "openness" to the Divine. He draws a distinction between "[t]he possibility of experiencing grace and the possibility of experiencing grace *as* grace."[895] For the Divine intent to shape the structure of our created nature such as to produce a *potentia obedientialis* is neither to identify such a disposition with the Divine event of Self-communication itself, nor to necessitate such self-communication: "[t]o be ordained to grace, and to be so constituted that there is an exigence for grace which would render the whole ordination to grace futile if grace were not actually imparted, are by no means the same thing."[896]

Thus, Rahner attacks what one may suppose to be Henri de Lubac's conception of a natural desire for the supernatural, for necessitating or demanding grace, so undermining the integral quality of the "unexactedness of grace."[897] This position Rahner terms "intrinsicism," the contrast to extrinsicism, an interiorisation of grace such that human creatures are internally directed towards a supernatural end.[898] He holds that this outcome impinges on the sovereignty of God, for it appears that the creature is owed fulfilment of its desires towards God. As Reno says,

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consummation of it." Shepherd, p. 262. Rahner's advocacy of the pivotal nature of God's self-communication in world history is the proper grounding of general concurrence in special concurrence.

[894] Thus Michael Buckley writes: "For genuine reality is not threatened by the ground of all reality; on the contrary, reality is established in its freedom and autonomy by its ground. The dependence upon God is that which establishes my reality, not what denies it." Buckley, p.46.

[895] "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," *Theological Investigations*, Vol. I, p.300.

[896] "Nature and Grace," *Theological Investigations*, Vol. IV, p.186.

[897] Rahner, "Concerning the Relationship between Nature and Grace," *TI I*, p. 309-10.

[898] Again, Reno provides the following formula: "A relation is internal if P is related to Q in such a way that if P were not related to Q then P would no longer be P." Reno, p.121.

> For Rahner, our existence cannot be internally related to God's grace. For ultimately our relation to God is governed by the pure love of God's self-giving, and love cannot be the 'unexpected miracle,' nor can it presuppose a 'real partnership' if it is already constitutive of our human nature.[899]

As we can see from this last quotation, intrinsicism does not only threaten the sovereignty of God, but also undermines the very meaning of a concept of human nature and loosens the integrity of the human creature.[900] Rahner's own concept of *potentia obedientialis* or "openness" differs from intrinsicism, in that it is "openness," not desire, which "demands" fulfilment and so is intelligible even without the actualisation of the offer of Divine Self-communication.[901] John Galvin explains:

> This potency is not a separate faculty or regional section within us, like our ability to breathe, but rather our human nature as such. If the divine self-communication did not occur, our openness toward being would still be meaningful as the condition for the possibility of human knowledge and human self-disposal in freedom. We would still have to do with God but only as the distant horizon of our existence. But because of this same openness we are by nature possible recipients of God's self-communication, listeners for a possible word. While the actual offer of grace transforms our concrete existence, it does not destroy that which characterizes us as specifically human - our finite openness as spirit in the world.[902]

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[899] ibid., p.122.

[900] Stephen Duffy comments: "From the creature's side, a gift may not be regarded as unexacted when God's generosity must objectify itself by implanting in the very nature of the creature a definite disposition, so that under pain of losing its proper intelligibility, nature must find in this gift its unique finality and sole possible fulfilment. God's wisdom would owe itself the completion of this disposition, since it has created this disposition in such a way that it demands its fulfilment. ..... Where an unconditioned disposition of nature precedes the gift, the gift itself can be thought of as unexacted only in the sense in which nature itself is , i.e., only in the sense that God's creation is free in the first place." S.J. Duffy, *The Graced Horizon: Nature and Grace in Modern Catholic Thought* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), pp. 89-90.

[901] The Scholastic tradition had various strategies to show that the *potentia obedientialis* was not a natural capacity to see God. First, the potency was said to be *passive*, in being ordered only to receive act not to produce it. Secondly, it is *essential*, viz. it is the capability of receiving the first, not the second, act . This is so because it is without the form or intelligible principle, which permits a second act to be produced in it. For example, children may be capable of virtuous acts, but they do not possess the settled disposition to act virtuously, which some adults might have, because they have not acquired the form or habit that permits them to act virtuously at will. Thirdly, the potency is *remote*: it does not have the same *proportion*, either formally or virtually, as the first act to which it is ordered. Lonergan gives the example of prime matter's reception of a spiritual soul. It is the human body that has the support of a spiritual soul as its end, because it has a suitability, it is proportionate to its end. On the other hand, matter lacks this suitability, unless it undergoes a further determination of being ordered into a human body. So a potency is *remote* if it requires some further determination in order for it to be fitted to receive a specific first act. Or again, for the adult the virtuous end of action is already reflected in a disposition to such an end, whereas in the case of the child it is not. Lastly, for precisely this reason, the potency is *obediential* rather than natural because it is *extrinsically* activated by God, rather than intrinsically activated by the finite efficient cause of a human nature. For further details on the Scholastic approach to these issues see Bernard Lonergan, *De ente Supernaturali* (Torronto: Regis College, 1973), and M. Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative: Grace, World-Order and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan* (Torronto: University of Torronto Press, 1995).

[902] J. Galvin, "The Invitation of Grace," p.72.

The postulation of an obediential potency or "openness" to the Divine does not presuppose an ontological continuity with God. Just because one has some capacity to receive Divine Self-communication, does not mean that one possesses the communication itself. There is a sense in which the receptive capacity of a person is anticipatory,[903] but it does not follow that this necessitates the possession of an innate knowledge of it.[904] Someone may have the capacity to enter into an intimate personal relationship with another human being, without that ability detracting from the fact that when such a relationship occurs it is unexpected, unexacted, a gift which never ceases to surprise, a real encounter with otherness.[905]

It may be noted that this idea of receptivity, embodied in the traditional Scholastic concepts of a natural desire to see God and an obediential potency,[906] is a correlative to the concept of a human *latent true nature* (LTN) developed in Chapter 5. My concept of a LTN is broader than that of the traditional concepts, but its function overlaps with them, in that it was adopted precisely to account for the fact that creatures are able to respond to the Divine initiative and are not wholly enslaved to sin. Like the concepts of the *obedentia potentialis* and natural desire, one's LTN is only ever perfectly fulfilled in relation to the Divine and ultimately eschatologically. The concept is in line with a broadly Aristotelian-Thomist teleological conception of nature, which is also the basis for traditional

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[903] Hence, Rahner's concept of the "Vorgriff," which means a preliminary to a grasp.

[904] In the same way, it may be said that a miracle is not "a violation of the laws of nature," if we are unaware of either the full set laws, or how they are supported.

[905] Bernard Lonergan explicates Aquinas' position that neither the natural desire to see God, nor the *obedentia potentialis*, necessitates the beatific vision. The natural desire has a natural proportionate end or beatitude, let us say analogical knowledge of God, but for Lonergan this is not the end of the story, as this does not constitute a *perfect* fulfilment of the desire. B.F. Lonergan, "The Natural Desire to See God," in *Collection: Papers by Bernard* Lonergan, ed. by Fred Crowe, SJ. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1967), p.91. To deny this would be to deny the supernaturality of the beatific vision, and that there is a *disproportion* between any human desire and the fulfilment of its end. Lonergan explicates this further by utilising the Scholastic distinctions: active and passive, accidental and essential, proximate and remote, intrinsic and extrinsic (see footnote 901 above). Michael Stebbins comments: "The natural desire to see God, then, is an innate tendency of a potency, rather than an act; because it is found in a potency that flows from human nature, it is proportionate to that nature; but because the desire is only a remote potency in relation to its object, it does not ground a natural exigence for the beatific vision." Stebbins, p.154.

[906] Bernard Lonergan writes on the distinction and relation between these two concepts: "[N]atural potency and obediential potency are congruent [*conveniunt*] inasmuch as intrinsically they are one and the same human potency, but they differ by reason of the agent proportionate to their actuation, since a finite agent is proportionate to the actuation of a natural potency but only an infinite agent is proportionate to the actuation of an obediential potency." *De ente Supernaturali*, p.75, quoted in Stebbins.

discussions of the obediential potency. The fact that human creatures have God-given ends, does not mean that their attainment is necessary.[907]

The structure of Rahner's account can be appropriated to meet the conception of Spirit-human relations established in Chapter 3, 4 and 5. The Divine personal presence, as the offer of Self-communication (principle I) activates and actuates the potentiality of the obediential potency or the LTN. George Vass in his explication of Rahner, refers to the event of the personal encounter of the Divine and human, which results from God's offer of Self-communication.

> Now someone becoming aware of and using this opportunity for co-relationship with the 'other' who is God somehow encountered, can become a person *capable* of living out of this encounter. ..... Man is engraced insofar as he is, out of this relationship, made capable of love which embraces not only his fellow human persons but also the person of God.[908]

The language of "engracement", which Shepherd sometimes calls "empowering" or "actuating,"[909] is an important feature of Rahner's account. The concepts of the empowerment, actuation, even elevation of the human, need to be set within the relational framework of the Divine offer of Self-communication, consonant with the Personalist model proposed.

I.03) Conclusion.

The Divine intent of revelation is the overarching bond of creation and redemption and determines, in a general way, the created structures that allow us to operate. As the Divine intent is that of Self-communication towards the end of bringing about full communion with His creatures, we should expect the Divine purpose to specifically shape our created reality in such a way which allows for, not only human receptivity, but also a capacity to freely respond.

II. The Doctrine Of The Covenant.

The concept of the covenant is one of the key personal motifs of the Bible and as such may develop further the Personalist model of Divine-human interaction proposed. Following on

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[907] See Bernard Lonergan's explanation of Aquinas' conception of created ends and exigence. *De ente Supernaturali*, p.76.
[908] *The Mystery of Man*, Vol.II, p.115.
[909] Shepherd, p.172.

from the first section, there is also a link with Rahner's drive to reconnect the doctrines of creation and redemption, for Karl Barth presents the covenant as the overarching framework of the divine purpose of love. He writes that the covenant is "the basis and essence, the ontological substance of the original relationship between God and man."[910] The contention of this Chapter is that the covenant is not to be reduced to an agreement or contract between God and man, nor is it limited solely to one particular tribe, but is the basis of the Divine-human relationship itself.

The concept of the covenant is not to be reduced to the concept of a *contract*, which is "one powerful contemporary metaphor for social life."[911] As we have seen, a contract for Vincent Brummer is something that is entered into out of self-interest and is impersonal:

> [I]n agreements of rights and duties my partner, as well as the relationship, has an instrumental value for me as a means for furthering my own interests. As such they are replaceable by any other means which might be equally effective.[912]

Miroslav Volf complements this definition of a contract, by giving three of its essential components: being "*performance oriented*"("the point of a contract is to insure that a task is accomplished"),[913] "*limited commitment*" ("The contract obliges only to what it explicitly or implicitly states, no less and certainly no more"),[914] "strictly *reciprocal*"("'the 'duty to fulfil the duty' is for each side dependent on the other side's record. I am obliged to abide by the contract only as long, and in as far, as the partner does the same'").[915] As James Barr has pointed out the Hebrew term for the covenant, *berit*, has a wide scope of reference, which does not exclusively distinguish between some of the terms in English that might appear to be its referent, such as "agreement," "treaty," "contract," "promise," "obligation."[916] However, as Bernard W. Anderson holds, the root meaning of *berit* is

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[910] *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, Sc.57, 44.
[911] Volf, p.148. Volf is not the only theologian recently to make the distinction between covenant and contract, Paul F. Palmer SJ does so in his article, "Christian Marriage: Contract or Covenant?", *Theological Studies* Vol.33 (1972), pp.617-65.
[912] *The Model of Love*. pp.126. Although, Brummer draws upon a tripartite distinction between manipulative, contractual and loving personal relations, he does not utilise the concept of the covenant in his description of loving personal relations. The closest he comes to it is in section 7.3 in his distinction between "agreements and fellowship." ibid., pp. 164 - 73.
[913] Volf, p.148.
[914] ibid..
[915] ibid., p.149.
[916] J. Barr, "Some Semantic Notes on the Covenant," *Beitraege zur Alttestamentlichen Theologie, Festschrift fuer Walther Zimmerli zum 70. Geburststag,* eds. by H. Donner, R. Hanhart, R. Smend (Goettingen, 1977).

"bond" or "fetter," signifying a "binding relationship," and hence not a "limited commitment," but an expression of God's love and fidelity. Neither is the covenant of the God of Israel, merely "performance orientated," nor "strictly reciprocal," although it does involve obligation. For God's love is steadfast, gracious and merciful towards an unfaithful people. It is "based on commitment, which includes both promises and obligations, and which has the quality of reliability and durability."[917] Although Brummer does not employ the concept of covenant, it shall be argued that the Divine-human covenant is indeed a form of personal loving relation.

In a recent study Ernest Nicholson has shown that the Hebrew understanding of the covenant places a strong emphasis on *choice* and hence on personal relations, which stand as a counterpoint to the polytheism and the sacralisation of religious society in the Ancient Near East.

> The concept of a covenant between Yahweh and Israel is...the concept that religion is based, not on a natural or ontological equivalence between the divine realm and the human, but on *choice*: God's choice of his people and their 'choice' of him, that is, their free decision to be obedient and faithful to him. Thus understood, 'covenant' is the central expression of the distinctive faith of Israel as 'the people of Yahweh,' the children of God by adoption and free decision rather than by nature or necessity.....So far from being a social institution, the covenant represents the refusal of prophets and their disciples to encapsulate Yahweh's relationship with his people in institutions, and to insist that it depends on a moral commitment on both sides which needs to be continually reaffirmed in faithful conduct, not taken for granted (as were institutions such as the monarchy in the ancient world) as though it were part of the order of nature.[918]

Note the stress on the categories of "choice," "moral commitment" to the One God, and in opposition to apostasy. What the eighth century prophets condemned Israel for was precisely their transgression, not of a rite, nor of a social order, but of "the basis of Yahweh's divine 'order' in the sphere of interpersonal relationships."[919] The primary focus

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pp. 23-38. He writes, "There seems to be no other bordering and distinguishing term under which they might fall, if a specific terminological distinction is to be made." Barr, p.31.

[917] "Covenant," in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, eds. by Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: OUP, 1993), p.138.

[918] E.W. Nicholson, *God and His People. Covenant and Theology in the Old Testament*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 215-6. Nicholson's main thesis is that the concept of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel was instigated sometime during the second half of the monarchy and utilised mostly by the Deuteronomists. He argues that the covenant was not, therefore, a long standing institution of Israel, but a theological innovation which reached its peak in the late pre-exilic period and the 6th century.

[919] ibid., p.206.

of the Hebraic covenant was to assure the exclusive nature of the relationship between God and His people.[920]

As the basis of the loving personal relationship between God and humankind, the covenant follows the characteristics of God's gracious action: it is initiated by the Divine; unconditional in origin, if not wholly without conditions (hence bilateral); it involves God's promise and steadfast intention towards humankind; and although unilaterally established, it is mutual or reciprocal in accomplishment. Again, Nicholson brings out the primarily personal dimension of the covenant:

> The making of the covenant was not only upon Yahweh's initiative; more than that, he himself was a partner to it. In no sense, therefore, did the covenant-theology conceive of life as mere observance, upon penalty of disaster, of divinely decreed laws. Rather, life for Israel was understood as fellowship with Yahweh who had entered a covenant with this people, and the fulfilment of Yahweh's commandment was to be an expression of this fellowship. Hence keeping the commandments can be described as loving Yahweh (cf. Exod.20:6; Deut.5:10; .... Josh.22:5).[921]

The personal nature of the covenant is often indicated in the Hebrew Scriptures by association with marriage. Hosea condemns Israel for marital unfaithfulness (5.7) and in Malachi the 'covenant' of marriage becomes a sort of symbol of the Divine-human covenant (2.13-16).

The fact that the covenant is unconditional in origin and in persistence means that Volf's third criterion for a contract, that it be "strictly reciprocal," is not applicable. Israel continually breaks the agreement but God graciously restores it. Moreover, although there is a bilateral element to the covenant, it is not the case that the covenant is arrived at by negotiation between two parties. Neither is it the case that the conditions, which God lays down, have first to be met, with the reward bestowed consequentially. Rather the stipulations made by the covenant constitute, "the regulations for the new life that is made possible by God's covenant."[922] The covenant involves all the characteristics of a truly loving relationship: love, trust and obedience (Dt. 7.9, 12; I Kings:8.23). It is difficult to

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[920] As Nicholson goes on to note, "the 'breaking,' 'transgressing,' 'not keeping,' 'forsaking,' and 'forgetting of' the covenant are most frequently described precisely in terms of 'going after other gods,' 'going whoring after other gods,' 'serving other gods'"(ibid., pp.213), that is precisely in relational terms.
[921] ibid., p.215.
[922] J. Guhrt, "Diatheke," in *NIDNTT*, Vol. 1, ed. by Colin Brown., p.367.

see that the covenant fully matches up to Volf's first criterion of a contract, namely, that it be "performance orientated," for how is a relationship a "task" which may be objectified? The living, relational, non-static nature of the covenant is emphasised in the New Testament[923] by reference to its unwritten character. Thus, Volf's second condition of a contract appears to be transgressed, for the covenant does not involve "limited commitment." In II Corinthians 3.6 Paul declares that the Divine covenant is "not in a written code," but is personal, because it is mediated by the Spirit, and results in the personal attributes of freedom (II Cor.3.14, 16-17). Paul contrasts the Jew who is one only outwardly with the Jew who is one inwardly "by circumcision that is of the heart, in the Spirit and not in the letter"(Rom.2.29, cf. Deut.30.6). He also notes the Gentiles who have come to faith in Christ and who, apart from the law, do by nature the works of the law and show that it is written in their hearts (Rom. 2.14-16). That does not mean that the law, of the so-called "Old Covenant," is redundant. As Jesus says in Matthew's Gospel, "I have come not to abolish but to fulfil"(Mtt.5.17), yet he then proceeds to radicalise the law (v.21ff). Jesus' concern is with the all-encompassing covenant, which grounds the abundance or fullness of life (John 10.10). Unlike previous covenants, the "new covenant" instituted in Christ is "eternal" (Hebrews 9.13; 13.20), and cannot be abrogated (Mtt.16.18).

It might be objected that this analysis of the covenant as requiring the possibility of the human covenant partner responding to the Divine initiative does not fit some of the early covenants. E. Kutsch argued in the 1970s that the Hebraic covenant was never used in the sense of an agreement, which could be in some way bilateral, but was essentially either promissory or obligatory.[924] Kutsch's point is perhaps best made in relation to the Noahic, Davidic and Abrahamic covenants, where the Divine promise is accompanied by a *lack of corresponding obligation* on the part of man. These covenants seem to be one-sided, they require no condition on the part of the human covenant partner. For example, God enjoined upon Abraham the rite of circumcision, but His promise to Abraham, called a

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[923] Reference to the covenant in the New Testament are much more less frequent, but not without reason: "If the term covenant (*diatheke*) does not appear as one might expect, the reason is that the underlying thought has been taken over in the sayings about the Kingdom of God." ibid., p.369. Further, G.E. Wright has argued that another reason for the lack of references is that the term 'covenant' had legalistic connotations in the New Testament period. G.E. Wright, "The Theological Study of the Bible," in *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*, ed. C.M. Laymon (Nashville & New York, 1971).

covenant, was not conditional upon the observance of circumcision, though a penalty attached to its non-observance.

In response it seems difficult to deny any bilateral element to the Hebrew covenants. As Gordon McConville writes regarding the Noahic covenant, it is not a case of either/or:

> Clearly, the element of promise dominates it, yet here too, when Genesis 8:22- 9:7 is taken with 9:8-17, the note of command is also present in the prohibition both of murder (vv.5-6) and of the consumption of blood (v.4), which is to play an important role in the Old Testament's ritual laws (Leviticus 17:11) and which is even sustained in the New Testament (Acts 15:20). In reality, therefore, both promise and command belong within the covenantal thought of Genesis 1-11.[925]

A response is also expected in the Abrahmic covenant (Gen.17.1, 9-14), and circumcision acts as the sign of the covenant. The Davidic covenant although possessing this strong promissory element, is only intelligible within the context of the Mosaic covenant (I Kings 2.4), which has a more bilateral form. It is also wrong to take the institution of the various covenants out of the context of the individual faith stories of these patriarchs, stories that testify to the bilateral nature of the relationship and the requirement to show trust and obedience.

Moreover, a conception of the covenant cannot afford to neglect the crucial texts contained in Exodus, Joshua and Hosea. The key Sinai covenant is clearly a covenant which requires bilateral obligation. The human partners are bound to specific obligations toward the Divine and one another (the Decalogue), transgression of which will bring awful retribution. Nicholson comments on the covenant described in Exodus 34:10-28: "one covenant is here announced, encompassing both Yahweh's commitment to Israel as his people, and the commitment this requires of, and lays upon, Israel precisely as his people."[926] Nicholson shows how this pattern is repeated in the other covenant texts in Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Hosea:

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[924] E. Kutsch, *Verheissung und Gesetz. Untersuchungen zum sogenannten 'Bund' im Alten Testament*, *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 131 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973).
[925] Gordon J. McConville, "*berit*," in *NIDOTTE*, Vol.I, ed. W.A. VanGemeren, p.749.
[926] *God and his People*, pp.211. He writes: "It is not here the case of the making of one *berit* followed by the making of another separate *berit*, as Kutsch's understanding of the meaning of the word would appear to imply for its usage here in vv. 10 and 27, the first an obligation which Yahweh takes upon himself (v.10; *eine Selbstverpflichtung*), the other an obligation which he imposes upon Israel (v.27; *eine Verpflichtung des Volkes*)." ibid..

> [T]hese promises are conditional upon Israel's response to Yahweh; they reaffirm that the making and keeping of the covenant involved a choosing and deciding on Israel's part throughout its generations. Thus at Sinai Israel chose to enter the covenant, twice over giving its pledges in response to Moses's reporting and subsequent reading of the commandments (Exod.24:3-8). On the plains of Moab a subsequent generation chose and declared 'this day' that Yahweh had become its God (Deut.26:19). At Shechem Israel was again called upon to choose (Josh.24). It was a choice between life and death which each generation was called upon to make (cf.Deut.30:15-20; Josh.24:19).[927]

In sum, the covenant is unilateral in origin, but requires mutual commitment, and a balance between promise and command.[928] Similarly, although the 'New' covenant established by Jesus Christ is established once and for all (*ephapax*), it requires repentance and a turning to follow Christ in love and obedience. Thus, the key articulations of the Jewish and Christian covenant presuppose the free response of human beings. This does not mean that the salvation accomplished by Christ's fulfilment of the covenant, can be altered or haggled over by human beings. Rather, the covenant requires a free human acceptance of a reality that has already been opened up by Christ, and to which the only response is grateful acceptance, or rejection. There is no third way. No way, that is, that creatures may alter the covenant on their own terms.

It has been consistently argued throughout the thesis that if we are to avoid a conception of the Spirit-human relationship as on the "Divine Fiat" model, involving "take-over", coercion, or manipulation, then there has to be *space for the other*. The contention of this part of the Chapter will be to show that the concept of the covenant is the condition of that space, and the ground and security of the Divine-human relationship. This part will have two major sections. The first will use the concept of the covenant, inspired by Barth though not following him in detail, as a device for systematically contextualising the *generating question* of my thesis. This will strengthen the conclusions following on from the discussion of Rahner's concept of Self-communication and grace regarding the connections between creation and redemption. The second section will go beyond systematic contextualisation, and examine how the concept of the covenant may directly address the generating question of the thesis, and help develop the Personalist model.

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[927] ibid., pp. 214-15.
[928] This is also G.J. McConville's conclusion of his survey of the Old Testament literature *NIDOTT*, Vol.I, p.752.

II.01) Systematic Contextualisation: The Concept of the Covenant.

In this section it will be argued that the concept of the covenant provides the overarching connection between the doctrines of creation, Christology, reconciliation and eschatology, and as such a vital context to our *generating question*. This has to be shown in relation to the three movements of the *Heilsgeschichte*: creation, redemption (Incarnation), and perfection (consummation/eschatology). This is essentially a position in dogmatics, although such a categorisation is supported by some biblical scholarship.[929] Where appropriate I shall briefly indicate my main divergences from Barth's account.

II.0101) *Creation is the external basis of the covenant and the covenant is the internal basis of creation.*

This is the dictum that is at the heart of Barth's account of the doctrine of the covenant. Put simply the idea is that creation is designed to be a fit place for the enactment of God's loving purpose towards his creatures, the *theatrum gloriae dei*, and the covenant is the inner meaning of world history precisely as the instantiation of God's loving purposes. This position is not devoid of scriptural support. W.J. Dumbrell has made an exegetical case for creation being covenantal in character.[930] Although, the origin of this idea in Barth is very different from Rahner's conception of a graced creation, it seems there is substantial similarity. On both accounts creation is shaped and grounded by the Divine intent, or what Barth would call God's covenantal purposes. What this means, according to Barth, for the nature of the Divine-human relationship and for the basis of a conception of human freedom and personal identity is spelt out as follows:

> There is no existence of the creature in which it can originally belong elsewhere than to this compact. It has no attributes, no conditions of existence, no substantial or accidental predicates of any kind, in virtue of

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[929] W.J. Dumbrell, for example, argues that the "covenant" is the central unifying link between the Old and New Testaments. He maintains that behind the biblical records of the various 'sub-sets' of covenants, there is an essential covenant between God and humanity. Dumbrell posits a threefold working out of this covenant: 1.) the continued apostasy or unfaithfulness of Israel, results in the evolution of the eschatological hope of a new creation (Jer. 31.34; Ezk.40.48; Isa 40.66). Such an eschatologically hope is partially realised in the events of the New Testament, although this too points to fulfilment of the covenant in the eschaton. The development of the biblical covenants point to such an eschatological fruition. W.J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation. An Old Testament Covenant Theology* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1984).

[930] Dumbrell, pp.20-33. For example, Dumbrell points to the Noahic covenant and to the phrase "establish my covenant"(Gen.6:18). He notes the peculiarity of the use of the verb *heqim* in this context, as opposed to the more common verb for the inauguration of the covenant (*krt*, e.g. Gen.15:18; Exod.22:32). On this basis, he maintains that the Noahic covenant is a re-establishment of a relationship that had been hitherto existent, to wit, "a divine relationship established by the fact of creation itself." ibid., p.32.

> which it can or may or must be alien to the Founder of this covenant. .... It has no ground on which it can deal with him [God] on an equal footing. ..... And God wills from it [the covenant] only that for which he prepared and bound and pledged it when he first gave it its being and nature.[931]

Just as Rahner talks of the Divine presence or grace being "embedded in this world to begin with," we may equally say that humanity is embedded within the covenant, which is precisely the form of God's presence within the world. Both creation and covenant stem from the Divine initiative: "in both creation and covenant the dilemma 'God or man' is excluded, in both God alone is the cause of man's being himself; in creation it is God's command alone that causes man to freely realise himself, in the covenant it is again solely God's calling that enables man to answer freely."[932] Barth talks of creation as "one long preparation" for the fulfilment of the covenant, and an "equipment for grace,"[933] and of creation as "intrinsically determined as the exponent of his glory and for the corresponding service."[934] We must add that God's covenant activity is eschatological: "the connection that God's creation has with his covenant....is one of destination. God creates *for* the covenant, *in order* to raise humans further; he creates persons to enter into covenant with him, to make them his children."[935] The latter is precisely the reason why Rahner posits the *potentia obediential is* and the 'supernatural existential,' although for Barth such a supposition would be to undermine the Creator-creature distinction. In sum, creation is shaped and ordered by God's covenantal intentions. If we connect this with the two principles derived from Rahner, it entails that humanity is given at creation the receptivity required to respond to the direct presentation of God's covenantal intentions in Christ. As Schoonenberg writes:

> He makes the creature in the whole of its reality, and thus in the whole of its purposiveness and utility. Orientation towards the covenant and exaltation is therefore intrinsic to the creature.[936]

II.0101) Reconciliation I:[937] The Christological Proleptic Fulfilment of the Covenant.

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[931] *Church Dogmatics* III/1, pp. 96-7. There are similarities here with Rahner's contention that the idea of *natura pura* (pure nature) is to be rejected, and only given a hypothetical status as a *Restbegriff.*

[932] Piet Schoonenberg, *Covenant and Creation*, trans. by Peter Tomlinson (London: Sheed & Ward, 1968), pp.124-5.

[933] *Church Dogmatics*, III/1, p.230.

[934] ibid., p.231.

[935] Schoonenberg, p.144.

[936] ibid., p.147.

[937] "Barth claims.....that the thought of sinful man's reconciliation with God in Jesus Christ and of God's fellowship with sinful man, thereby made possible for him and for man, was in the mind of God before the

Jeremiah 31 reveals the frightening analysis that the covenant has been annulled by Israel's behaviour (v.32) resulting in the curse of the covenant, namely the breaking up of the body politic. Jeremiah 32 claims that the cycle of apostasy will be broken by the bestowal of "an everlasting covenant"(v.40) in the "hearts" of creatures(v.33).[938] The book of Hebrews proclaims that Christ is the "mediator of the new covenant"(9.15), the great High Priest who enters for us the heavenly sanctuary (7.26). The author of Hebrews maintains that the promises contained in the "new covenant,", are more propitious than those of old. They contain God's unconditional commitment to forgive sins, bought by the truly efficacious sacrifice of Jesus (9.1-14), which makes redundant the need for further sin offerings (10.18). For Barth, Jesus Christ has both the *revelatory* role of disclosing "the original and basic will of God,"[939] and how humanity may respond to it, as well as an *atoning* role as humanity's representative to God, taking upon himself "the lost cause of man." Hence, Jesus becomes the pivotal "mediator of the covenant,"[940] in an undeserved and unconditional act of grace. It is this structural dynamic which allows for the constancy of God's covenant in the face of human rebellion, and allows for the triumph of God over human sin "unilaterally."

All this is standard Christian soteriology. Where I diverge from Barth is on his version of the doctrine of election as the crucial bridge linking the doctrines of creation and

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world and man were created and thus even before sin became a reality. The unparalleled precedence thereby given to the idea of reconciliation over creation and sin has to be seen in the light of Barth's teaching on creation..., the Nihil... and reconciliation, before its true meaning can be grasped." H. Hartwell, *The Theology of Karl Barth* (London: Duckworth, 1964), p.109.

[938] G.E. Mendhall and G.A. Herion comment on this passage suggest that this is a rediscovery of the personal basis of the covenant: "....no longer are there a set of prohibitions and injunctions, no code of laws or externally enforced and legalistically defined body of 'commandments, statues, and ordinances' such as depicted in the Deuteronomistic History.... It is a description of the complete internalization of the divine will that makes unnecessary the entire machinery of external enforcement..... Even more astonishing is the abrogation of the entire paraphernalia of religious indoctrination: 'they shall no more teach each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying 'Know Yahweh'(v.34). Instead of the deposit and periodic reading of the covenant text, the knowledge of the divine will is deposited within the conscience of the members of the community.... Thus knowledge of God cannot be identified with the accumulated written corpus of prestigious scribes or theologians.... The community thus envisioned is not one subject to human social control but one that can only be monitored and maintained by the deity himself. In this regard, the vision and hope associated with this 'new covenant' draws deeply from that originally associated with the old." G.E. Mendhall and G.A. Herion"Covenant," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Vol.I, ed. D.N. Freedman (London/NY: Doubleday, 1992), pp.1192, 1193. Interestingly E. Nicholson comments on the paradox that this institution of the "new covenant" produces for the author, who "is constrained to produce a paradoxical theory according to which God himself promises to make possible the very response which he inexorably demands." Nicholson, p.216.

[939] *Church Dogmatics* IV/1, p.36.

[940] ibid..

redemption. For Barth the election of Jesus Christ is the primary act, which determines all Divine action in the world. The Divine-human distinction is such that human capacities and merits can never provide the basis for the covenant, which can only be established by God putting Himself in the place of man. The rest of us *are* "those whose place has been taken by Jesus Christ." The covenant partner of God is not 'man' as an idea, nor 'humanity' as a term for the species, but the one man Jesus and the 'people represented' in him: "Only secondarily, and for His sake, is it 'man' and 'humanity' and the whole remaining cosmos."[941]

However, as Colin Gunton argues, this position leads to, (i.) a too immediate incorporation of everything into Christ at the expense of eschatology, and, (ii.) an anthropocentric exclusion of non-human creation.[942] Furthermore, insofar as the covenant is primarily fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, the God-man, the primary covenant partner and only "secondarily" by humanity, one may question to what extent the covenant is just an intra-Divine covenant. Is this really a covenant that respects human otherness, if it is made not with humanity as a whole but only with the God-man? This leads to the impression of Divine narcissism. Only the humanity that participates in the *imago Dei*, that is the likeness of Christ, appears to be guaranteed entry into the covenant. The fact that God in Jesus Christ has become God *for* man and man *for* God, is not enough to secure the distinct integrity of human beings. For although Jesus is 'true man', He is also 'true God.' The 'who' of Jesus is the Divine 'who' of the second 'person' of the Trinity. If the Incarnation is to be truly *pro nobis* then, it has to be directed towards the mass of sinful creatures, the very intended covenant partners from the beginning. If it is not made clear that it is to the whole of humanity that the covenant is offered and directed, then Barth's own intention that the concept of the covenant unites creation and reconciliation appears to be undercut. For how can the covenant truly be the "internal basis of creation" if the creature is not a party to the covenant from the beginning? What sort of "fulfilment of the covenant" can Christ be, if all of humanity decides not to participate in His image?

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[941] *Church Dogmatics* II/2.

[942] Gunton writes that Barth's exposition of the concept of the covenant in relation to the doctrine of election: "makes creation not only second to covenant, but subordinate in a way that detracts from the fullness of the order of creation...[A]n eternal and thus pretemporal election, generous or no, tends to order all things to a beginning..... real eschatology is lost, or at least suggests only the playing out of that which has already been decided in advance in a way that endangers the freedom at once of the Spirit and of the creation." Gunton, *Christ and Creation* (Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, 1992), pp. 94, 95.

An alternative to Barth's position would be to hold that Jesus is the proleptic *fulfilment* of the covenant between God and humankind. Proleptic because although in Christ the *ephapax* form of the covenant has been made, as directed to humanity it is not completed without the perfection of creation which has yet to move *to* Christ in the Spirit.[943] Christ is not so much the one true covenant partner, but discloses the condition of the covenant's fulfilment· Election relates to God's covenant intention to freely relate with humanity as an expression of His love. Hence, it refers to the sweep of Divine history in creation, reconciliation and consummation, and not only to the specific, although pivotal act of the Incarnation of the Son. On my revised version of the Barthian dynamic, the emphasis comes off election conceived in this specific way (the election of Jesus), and onto the *intention* of God from the beginning to enter into a loving relationship with created humanity, which is only ever to be eschatologically realised.

II.0102) Reconciliation II: The Pneumatological Perfection of the Covenant.

Having established the axis of the covenant in the person of Jesus Christ, we are still left with the question of how God, who has shown that He is *pro nobis* (*in nobis* in the sense that Christ is 'true man') and *pro mundo*, can bring about the extension of the covenant into the lives of human beings as a subjective reality, to become *in nobis*. It is the Spirit who achieves this eschatological orientation of creation, and as Basil of Caesarea pointed out is its "perfecting cause."[944] Although Barth is fully aware of creation history as an eschatologically completed event, some commentators are less convinced of his appropriation of the Spirit as the perfecter.[945] If the covenant is made with the God-man, and human beings only enter the covenant when they have been brought into the 'likeness' of the God-man, then the Spirit appears, as does the bulk of humanity, to be initially active *outside* the covenant. In *Church Dogmatics* IV/4 when Barth has the opportunity to really explicate how the activity of the Spirit is *internally* constitutive of the covenant, he hardly mentions the relationship of the Spirit to the covenant. Thus, he writes that Jesus "fulfils

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[943] As Gunton points out: "Creation is not merely through Christ, but *to* him: from the beginning, it has an eschatological thrust. Salvation takes place *within* the created and material order with an eye to the perfection of that which was begun." *Christ and Creation*, p. 97.

[944] *On the Holy Spirit*, XV.36 and 38.

[945] "It is noteworthy that in Barth election is conceived rather binitarianly: as something happening between Father and Son. The Spirit contributes nothing structurally, as in much of Barth's theology." Gunton, *Christ and Creation*, p. 95.

and perfects the covenant,"[946] which seems to deny the role of the Spirit as the "perfecting cause." The sending of the Spirit is part of the promise of the covenant and a further condition of, not an appendage to, the central fulfilment of the covenant in Christ. If human creatures are God's intended covenant partners, and Christ the condition and mediator of the covenant, not the elect covenant partner, then we require a conception of the covenant which embraces the sweep of salvation history from creation to eschaton.

II.0103) Conclusion.

The covenant is to be explicated in a threefold manner in relation to: creation as its shaping and structuring order; Christology as key to the expression of God's covenantal intentions and the mediation of the covenant to humanity; the eschatological drawing of the Spirit of creation to its proper perfection in Christ. This still leaves plenty of room for risk and exposure. In the encounter with the risen Lord through the Spirit, human beings may still refuse to become covenant partners. This does not undermine the covenant offer, which remains unaffected by human sin thanks to the atonement, but it does mean that the response of human creation will affect the final outcome. Were this not so God might as well have made a covenant with Himself or with automata and achieved narcissistic fulfilment.

Thus, the doctrine of the covenant like Rahner's conception of Divine Self-communication and grace provides an essential context to the generating question of my thesis. The doctrine maintains God's essentially *personal* intentions towards His creatures, made as a free, unconditional Divine initiative, which nevertheless allows room for mutuality in the Divine-human relationship. It holds that creation is ordered so that God's intentions may be worked out and that His creatures may actually be receptive to them. It discloses the *substantive* end of freedom as disclosed in the Incarnation, and recognises the Spirit as the personal means of bringing God's covenant intentions to fruition. Miroslav Volf writes of the way that the covenant forms identity:

> Precisely because covenant is lasting, the parties themselves cannot be conceived as individuals whose identities are external to one another and who are related to one another only by virtue of their moral will and moral

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[946] *Church Dogmatics*, IV/4, p.60.

> practice. Rather, the very *identity* of each is formed through relation to others; the alterity of the other enters into the very identity of each.[947]

Although this is written of the realm of interpersonal human relations, it points us to the function of the covenant as grounding and forming identity. Humanity, however unconsciously, is embedded in God's covenantal love, which orders creation, forms and shapes human identity, and calls us to make explicit life in relationship with God. That communion, the explicit communion of the covenant, involves an exchange and reciprocal identification that brings about Christian *metamorphosis*.

II.02) Beyond Systematic Contextualisation.

II.0201) The Covenant as Promise of the Surety of Human Freedom and Identity.

As has been noted, the strategy of systematic contextualisation only indirectly addresses the problematic of my thesis. Nonetheless, the concept of the covenant may play a more *direct* role in positively addressing the *generating* question. If the covenant is the promise and pledge of the God revealed in Jesus Christ and the basis of a loving relationship, then we may be justified in asking whether such a covenant appears to fit with Christian experience. The concept of the covenant requires a covenant partner who in some sense, if it is not to be a manipulative relationship, must make a response, must accept and then contribute to the relationship. One may ask the question: does Christian experience support the belief that God acts in the covenantal manner described in this Chapter?

It is necessary first to draw some analogies with human experience of relationships to be clear on what might constitute evidence in relation to the question. Hugh Lafollette argues in his book on *Personal Relationships* that we come to know whether or not someone is to be trusted, honest, sensitive and so on, all necessary attitudes for a loving relationship, through observing and interpreting their behaviour. He compares this with an extreme dualist position where the self is an inner thing:

> In non-dualists' views, coming to know another resembles assembling a jigsaw puzzle. Just as we arrange the pieces of the puzzle to yield a coherent picture, we likewise arrange 'pieces' of a person's behavior to yield a coherent picture of her. Of course, we may have seen the other person only occasionally, and then in tightly prescribed circumstances; thus we do not have enough pieces of the puzzle to detect even a vague picture. Or we may have seen her in a variety of circumstances over an extended period of

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[947] Volf, p.154.

> time, yet don't know how to interpret her behavior: thus, although we have enough pieces of the puzzle, we don't know how to put them together.[948]

Moreover, Lafollette argues that we love for *reasons*, reasons that are, in part, connected with an assessment of a person's character traits. This is not to suggest that one could provide a comprehensive or systematic explanation of the love between two persons, merely that one could give a provisional explanation or insight. Indeed, the very ground for our being open to this or that particular person is partly because of our prior, however unconscious, assessment of what our preferences are.

> We think it is inappropriate to love someone for no reason at all and we assume some reasons are better than others..... Not only do we want to have reasons for loving others, we want others to love us for reasons. No one wants to be told:"....I don't like any of your traits. I just love you.'[949]

We discern character traits by being attentive to behaviour.[950] Likewise God's character and covenantal intentions are not hidden and inaccessible, but to be judged by His *action* in the world, principally through the Incarnation.

Lafollette gives four attitudes that are integral to intimate personal relationships, such as *trust*, *sensitivity, honesty*, *commitment* and *self-knowledge*. How might these be displayed in God's covenant relationship with His People? As a maximally perfect being God must have *self-knowledge*. What of the other qualities? I have trust when I have confidence in the behaviour of another person to respect and promote my true interests. The moral dimension of personal trust means that we trust *in* persons, as free agents who may discern how best to keep our trust. As Lafollette explains:

> [T]he trust we have in our closest friends is not just a trust that they will keep confidences; it is not just a trust that they will never hurt us - though doubtless these are crucial elements of trust. Rather, we trust the character of our intimates, we trust they have sufficient moral integrity to discern how they should act. If this trust is well founded, then they can be trusted to look after and promote our interests.[951]

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[948] Hugh Lafollette, *Personal Relationships. Love, Identity, and Morality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.73-4.

[949] Lafollette, p.51.

[950] In comparison to the dualist position, it is not enough to work on the mental attitudes of the person alone; attitudes are to be displayed in an agent's disposition. Thus, Lafollette writes: "Suppose, for a moment, that Rick regularly runs roughshod over the interests and needs of others. Further suppose we could investigate Rick's inner space (whatever this would mean) and discover that Rick was filled with kindly feelings toward those he harms. We would still maintain our conviction that he is callous. His feelings would be irrelevant to our evaluation." ibid., p.65.

[951] ibid., p.118.

The importance of this aspect of trust is that we trust *the character of our intimates*, a trust that springs from a knowledge and experience of relating to the whole person. Trust is part of a larger relational web. Sensitivity to the other's particularity is also part of trust and the construction of intimacy:

> A revealer demonstrates communicative sensitivity if, in her desire to be understood, she tailors her revelation to the capabilities and background of the listener, for example by expressing herself using language the listener can understand. A revealer demonstrates interest sensitivity if she responds to the recipient's general interests and desires, for example by expressing her views so as not to remind the listener of a recent tragedy.[952]

Honesty may be simply defined, as Lafollette does in the following way: "to be honest we must disclose our thoughts and feelings which are genuinely revealing, and we must disclose them in ways the other is likely to understand."[953] Lafollette talks of the need for meta-honesty, which is more than disclosing *x* to *y*, viz. honesty about something. It involves further engagement with oneself and the other person at a deeper level, of disclosure of our "overarching traits."[954] When meta-honesty is focused on the relationship itself, this may lead not just to an exchange of feelings or an expression of attitudes, but a discussion of each other's conceptions of the relationship.

The final necessary, although not sufficient, attitude for intimate relationships is *commitment*. The importance of commitment to intimate relationships is to be distinguished from contractual exchange, as Lafollette argues:

> In contrast, although close personal relationships are often beneficial, they are not good deals - they are not deals at all. Intimates adopt one another's interests as their own. Thus, if either participant in a relationship were to leave (or seriously consider leaving) a presumably close relationship as soon as it no longer satisfied her purely self-directed interests, we would have good reason to think that relationship had not been genuinely personal, but was instead, a trade relationship masquerading as a personal one.[955]

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[952] ibid., p.110.
[953] ibid., p.126.
[954] "To be completely (meta-)honest we should share this information with our intimates, to explain why we chose, in a specific situation to be dishonest. This would require exploring our motivation for dishonesty.....This disclosure provides our intimates with a different level of understanding and thus opens possibilities for real growth - for us, for them, and for our relationship." ibid., p.128.
[955] ibid., p.183.

Moreover, commitment conceived purely as a verbal pledge is one-dimensional, rather than as "a thread woven into the fabric of all close relationships"[956] As M. Friedman says: "Commitment to a person....has as its particular focus the unique concatenation of wants, desires, identity, history, and so on, of a particular person."[957] May it be said that God fulfils these necessary, although not sufficient intentional stances, in His covenantal relationship with His People?

The Hebrew Scriptures contain a testimony to God's faithfulness to His People Israel despite their unfaithfulness. It is precisely the fact that God does not merely hold to the conditions of the broken covenant, but renews the covenant through the self-giving of His Son and Spirit - a personal *commitment* to His creatures. Indeed, God's covenant faithfulness is a key Divine attribute, expressed by three related terms signifying reliability, faithfulness and steadfastness: *'emet* (also has the connotation of truth), *hesed,* and '*emunah*. Indeed, Yahweh's character is defined in several places as "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love (*hesed*) and faithfulness ('*emet*)."[958] God's faithfulness is associated with his covenant love (Deut.7.9; Pss.25.10; 85.10). Anthony Thiselton notes:

> [T]he connection between faithfulness and truth depends not on semantic considerations said to be peculiar to the Hebrew language, but on the fact that when God or man is said to act faithfully, often this means his word and his deed are one.....What is perhaps most distinctively Hebraic is the notion that even God binds himself to his word once spoken, especially in the covenant. Hence, the biblical writers speak repeatedly of the faithfulness of God, with whom word and deed are one.[959]

Hence, one may say, following Lafollette's criteria, that one may trust God, because one trusts God's character and moral integrity. His words and actions are one.

God's actions exhibit His faithfulness to His People. The Divine *hesed* rescues God's People from calamities and from the yoke of their oppressors. Thus, Lot praises the *hesed* of the three men (one of whom is Yahweh) that saved him and his family from the destruction wrought on Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen.19.19). The Divine *hesed* also

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[956] ibid..
[957] Marilyn Friedman, *What are Friends For? Feminist perspectives on personal relationships and moral theory* (Ithaca: Cornell University press, 1993), pp. 190-1.
[958] Exod. 34.6-7; Num14.18; Neh. 9.17; Ps. 86.15; 103.8; 145.8; Joel 2.13
[959] A.C. Thiselton, "Truth," in *NIDNTT*, Vol.III, ed. by Colin Brown, p.879.

comforts the afflicted: "Unless the LORD had given me help, I would soon have dwelt in the silence of death. When I said, 'My foot is slipping,' your love (*hesed*), O LORD, supported me"(Ps.94:17-18). The preservation of life is said to be due to the Divine *hesed*, in the face of the power of death: “Hear my voice in accordance with your love (*hesed*); preserve my life, O LORD, according to your laws”(Ps.119.149). God’s faithfulness is durable and everlasting, in contrast to worldly things, which persist but eventually decay (Isa 54.10a). Divine *hesed* is also the reason why one may seek God’s forgiveness or petition Him in prayer.[960] The sheer profusion of the Divine *hesed* is stressed by its permeation of creation (Ps 33:5), and by statements of its magnitude (Ps 106.7, 45; Ps. 117.2). It is the unity of word and action which is the Hebrew claim for the faithfulness of God and the good man alike, and of truth as an "actional" concept. Thiselton observes that this association between truth and action as expressing faithfulness, is also implicit in the New Testament:

> Positively, Jesus' own words always accord with his deeds and with actuality. He proclaims grace to the outcast; therefore he eats with tax collectors and sinners. He is messiah in word, proclaiming the advent of the kingdom of God; therefore he is also messiah in deed, demonstrating the advent of the kingdom by works of power. Jesus' life of integrity culminates in the cross. Thus his life provides backing that gives the status of reliable currency to his words.[961]

God's character is revealed by His action in the world, specifically, His becoming incarnate in space and time (John 3.16). In so doing, God has reached out by His revelatory action and as a result has given the Christian community the foundation and orientation for its continued life in the Spirit.[962] Jesus Christ is the faithful and true witness (Rev. 3.14), the Faithful and True (Rev. 19.11). The "meta-honesty" of God is expressed in that in the Incarnation *revealer* and *revealed* are one.[963] This is the ultimate expression, one might say, of the Hebraic conception of truth given in action. As we have noted from the book of Hebrews, Christ’s sacrifice is said to be ultimately propitious and Jesus is the covenant surety (7.22). In the Incarnation God gives Himself in sacrificial love (John 15.13-14). God's honesty is displayed in His frank exposure of the sins of His creatures. At the same

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[960] Num 14:17-19; Neh.13:22; Ps 6:4; 44:26; 109:21, 26; 119:149.
[961] Thiselton, *NIDNTT*, Vol.III, p.883.
[962] Karl Barth puts the point this way: "The baptising community and those whom it baptises have both the basis behind them and the goal before them." *Church Dogmatic*, IV/4, p.195.
[963] Thus according to Barth the Triune God Himself is "in unimpaired unity yet also in unimpaired difference" Revealer, Revelation and Revealedness. *Church Dogmatic*, I/1, p.339.

time His forgiveness ("The New Covenant brings forgiveness" [Rom.11.27]) and His guidance in both the 'old' and 'new' covenants point to what is required to transform the human person into the state of faithful and obedient covenant partnership. As Miroslav Volf comments, forgiveness enhances, rather than negates, freedom and identity, which is surely a key sign of *sensitivity* towards the other:

> Forgiveness is the boundary between exclusion and embrace. It heals the wounds that the power-acts of exclusion have inflicted and breaks down the dividing wall of hostility. Yet it leaves a distance between people, an empty space of neutrality, that allows them either to go their separate ways in what is sometimes called 'peace' or to fall into each other's arms and restore broken communion.[964]

Volf uses the metaphor of "the embrace" as complementary to the concept of the covenant. For our purposes of focusing on the import of the Incarnation, he explicates the metaphor of the embrace in relation to the cross:

> At the heart of the cross is Christ's stance of not letting the other remain an enemy and of creating space in himself for the offender to come in. .... The cross is the giving up of God's self in order not to give up on humanity; it is the consequence of God's desire to break the power of human enmity without violence and receive human beings into divine communion. The goal of the cross is the dwelling of human beings 'in the Spirit,' 'in Christ,' and 'in God.' Forgiveness is therefore not the culmination of Christ's relation to the offending other; it is a passage leading to embrace. The arms of the crucified are open - a sign of a space in God's self and an invitation for the enemy to come in.[965]

God's character as revealed in the Incarnation is one of an open, inviting embrace, which waits patiently for a response and is concerned to make room for His human creatures. The Incarnation as the proleptic fulfilment of the Divine covenant shows humanity the way to enter into the embrace, that is, it offers the condition of the covenant, which is faith in Christ. The offer of the embrace, is tendered with "space" for the human creature. Such a "space" is embodied in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' encounter with people, and his immediate awareness of their needs.

In line with the Personalist model of this thesis, God's sensitivity to His creatures in revelation can best be conceived by utilising a model of "dialogue," as David Brown does, echoing many of the points mentioned in Lafollette's discussion of sensitivity:

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[964] Volf, pp.125-6.
[965] ibid., p.126.

> [R]evelation is a process whereby God progressively unveils the truth about himself and his purposes to a community of believers, but always in such a manner that their freedom of response is respected....[T]he term 'dialogue' most effectively sums up this process.....it suggests on the one hand, accommodation to one's interlocutor - expressing oneself at a level which he can understand and, on the other hand, some contribution from that interlocutor, some explication of the point which he believes the dialogue to have reached, which will then in turn elicit a further response and so on.[966]

It has been argued above, following Nicholson that God's bestowal of His covenant involves a real *choice* on the part of His People, to respond faithfully or to become involved in vain idolatry. God respects His creatures to give them that choice and does not establish His covenant by *dictat*.

Finally, the Divine direction to his creatures given in the foundation of the Church and the inspiration of Scripture, is yet another sign of God's faithfulness that he will not leave His People as "orphans"(John.14:18). The role of the Sacraments also function as signs of God's covenantal faithfulness, with the Eucharist as the new covenant meal or celebration. In the catholic tradition God's action through the lives of the Saints provides reassurance and guidance. The New Testament talks of God rewarding those who do His good will (Mtt.545). He leads believers through the trial of temptation (I Cor.10.13), and will fulfil His promises (II Cor.118-19). Applying a form of the principle of credulity,[967] one may take the testimony of Christians throughout the centuries and ask the question: do they experience that God is faithful to His covenant, and that human freedom and identity are respected? With a response to the problem of evil to hand, *prima facie*, the claim of the

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[966] D. Brown, *The Divine Trinity*, p.70.

[967] Richard Swinburne defines the principle of credulity in the following terms: "It is a principle of rationality that (in the absence of special considerations) if it seems (epistemically) to a subject that *x* is present, then probably *x* is present; what one seems to perceive is probably so." R. Swinburne, *The Existence of God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p.254. It is argued that such a principle is required if our experiential claims are not to succumb to a search for justification of experience which leads to an infinite regress or circle. William Alston's defence of religious perception is based on mystical *practices*: mystical practices and sense perceptual practices exhibit analogous epistemic structure. It would be unreasonable, claims Alston, if one were to reject mystical perception while accepting sensory perception, unless one possessed good reasons for maintaining that mystical practices were unreliable. Any disanalogies between the two sets of practices may be accounted for by the differences between the nature of the objects of each perceptual practice. In both cases, what would constitute "good reasons" for rejecting religious experience may be said to be threefold: 1) a disproof of the existence of God; 2) a natural explanation for religious experience which demonstrates that such experiences are caused by natural sources which are known to produce false and deceptive experiences; 3.) systematic reasons for holding that perceptual claims derived from such experiences are inconsistent or incoherent. Theists argue that such reasons for rejecting religious experience are yet to be found. W.P. Alston, *Perceiving God* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

Church is that the majority of Christian testimony is affirmative in this regard.[968] The majority of Christians do not experience the Divine as a coercive force, pressing to "take over," but as a loving presence, whose embrace is like that of the father in the parable of the prodigal son.

II.0202) Confirmation from the secular perspective.

Common intuition holds that human beings are free and have a distinct personal identity, with causal power. Most philosophers agree that such an intuition of free-will is universal, and although they may then wish to go on to explicate a concept of freedom in different ways (compatibilism, libertarianism etc.). Few philosophers wish to argue for no conception of freedom at all or that our intuitions concerning our freedom ought not to be treated seriously, even if their error is to be shown. As the intuition of freedom is pretty much universal to human beings it appears to support, though certainly does not necessarily entail the claim that God has no intention to undermine human freedom. It is consonant with Christian theism. For as this is God's world, why should God wish for His creatures to be in a state of such universal delusion? Such an intuition is, of course, very far from a replacement for a sophisticated conception of freedom, and how it is used is very much open to distortion. People do come to the conclusion that this intuition concerning freedom equates to a freedom without God, and human history is littered with examples of the delusion of taking one's own freedom to be *causa sui*. However, a sophisticated Christian epistemological position would wish to uphold an epistemic realism which endorsed, *certeris paribus*, appearances. God created His world good, and intends us to operate at a level of transparency and honesty. This is not possible if we continually doubt our intuitions in a radical way. A universal intuition of freedom, set within a doctrine of creation shaped by the covenant, suggests that such an intuition did not arise as a matter of chance. This is not to say that such an intuition may not be perverted.

In addition, the very ambiguity of God's reality to humankind, the so called "hiddenness of God," allows for the possibility of human beings to come to faith as a result of a personal,

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[968] The question of *discernment* of God's action will be addressed in the next Chapter.

free response to the encounter with the Divine.[969] The "hiddenness of God" is embedded within the Christian and wider theistic tradition. The theophanies in the Hebrew Scriptures describe the inability of human beings to bear the presence of God, a point followed up in the theology and mysticism of the Eastern tradition. Two modern day philosophers of religion, M.J. Murray and Robert McKim, discuss whether to exercise freedom in a morally significant manner, one must be free *from* certain conditions, which would otherwise act as compulsions to act or believe in certain ways.[970] If God were not to remain hidden to some degree, His full presence would constitute a compulsion, which would undermine the morally significant exercise of human freedom. God's full presence would be so impressive, that we would lose the deliberative and reasoned exercise of freedom to decide whether or not to believe in Him. In short, in the face of God we would only have *one* course of action, to wit, to believe in Him.

Murray proposes that an argument of this kind must show at least two things. First, it must show that the full presence of the Divine is incompatible with a morally significant sense of being free to believe. Secondly, it must demonstrate that the claim of the Judeo-Christian scriptures that lack of faith will be punished by eternal damnation is also compatible with a morally significant sense of freedom. The threat of eternal punishment is a strong one. According to an orthodox Christian theism it will occur at God's appointed time. For a person who has heard of this claim and believes it to be true, their freedom to believe in God is threatened by compulsion.[971] Murray argues that a threat can vary according to the degree of, what he calls, *epistemic imminence*. A presentation or communication of something can be made more or less forcefully. Thus, for example, the

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[969] My argument here is inspired by the recent raising of this issuing in the philosophy of religion. See, for example: Michael J. Murray, "Coercion and the Hiddenness of God," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol.30 (1993), pp.27-38; Robert McKim, "The Hiddenness of God," *Religious Studies*, Vol.26 (1990), p.141-161.

[970] Richard Swinburne, for example, holds that if we are going to be truly responsible for one another's well being then we must have the power not just of benefiting one another but harming each other and nature as well. R. Swinburne, "The problem of evil," in *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion*, eds. by S. M. Cahn and D. Shatz (Oxford: OUP, 1982), p.8. Peterson also argues along these lines: "At stake here is not merely the ability of humans to choose among options, but the ability to choose among significant kinds of options: between goods and evils, even the highest goods and the most terrible evils." M. Peterson, *The Problem of Evil* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), p.104.

[971] McKim writes: "If we have a proof, or a compelling case, then everything speaks for the existence of God. The existence of God would stare us in the face. It might be a belief which one could resist, but it would seem not to be a belief that one would choose to adopt, except perhaps in the special case where one had chosen *not* to hold it and then changed one's mind. Generally speaking, unless we chose *not* to hold it, we *would* hold it." McKim, p.152.

latest particularly gruesome government advertisements about seatbelt use in cars, is not designed to engage the taciturn consent of people who would probably all agree publicly that seatbelt use was necessary. Rather, it is designed to present the message so *forcefully* that people feel that they really have no other option other than to wear seatbelts. Murray applies this reasoning to the case of the Divine-human relationship and the prospect of eternal damnation. He argues that a degree of Divine hiddenness makes the prospect of eternal punishment less *epistemically* imminent, enough to secure a morally significant degree of freedom for the human person.

> [I]f God desires that there be individuals with free-will who can use it in morally significant ways, then He must decrease the threat imminence of eternal and temporal punishment and He, in fact, does so by making the existence of the threat epistemically ambiguous. It is this epistemic ambiguity that we call the problem of the hiddenness of God.[972]

Robert McKim points out that it is possible for there to be a valid argument for something, and for people still to reject it through irrational motives. In response, one might say that although one could choose to believe on some irrational basis, it would be difficult to choose, with the exception of mental abnormality, *to* believe on such grounds, to wit, on the understanding that they are wholly irrational. However, McKim poses another objection, by drawing a distinction between *belief that* and *belief in* God's existence. The thought is that it is conceivable that one believes *that* God exists because of His *epistemic imminence*, and it would be irrational to do otherwise. Yet equally it would be quite rational still to withhold belief *in* God, viz. have faith in or commitment to God. One could project such a distinction onto a further differentiation between *nominal* and *full* theism, whereby *epistemic imminence* ensures the rational compulsion of maintaining *nominal* theism, while not entailing the further step of that belief affecting one's will, to produce commitment to *full* theism. McKim suggests a counter-argument to the last point, based on a "linkage" between belief *that* and belief *in*:

> To be even a nominal theist is to accept that there is a creator of all things who cares about you, knows what is in your interest, wishes what is best for you, and so on. Once one accepts these beliefs, it seems that the rationality of failing to be a full theist, and failing to believe in God, would be at least diminished. One way to characterize the situation is to say that there is *linkage* of a certain sort between these different sorts of beliefs.....an elimination of rational freedom of choice about nominal belief would also

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[972] Murray, p. 34.

> be tantamount to an elimination of rational freedom to choose about full theism and belief in God.[973]

However, the nature of this purported linkage appears far from necessary: the demand of rational coherence of beliefs requires a linkage, but it is also clear that human beings are irrational, or that their intellect does not always connect with their will. Thus, McKim does not raise the paradigm Christian example given in the Letter of James: "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe - and shudder"(2.19). Why do the demons not have faith? One must suppose that their wills have become perverted, that their first and second-order desires to do evil trump the recognition of their intellect that God exists. One may appeal to what might be termed "agent defectiveness" in the face of Divine revelation, a defectiveness which is caused itself by the agent's abuse of free choice.[974]

In sum both McKim and Murray come to the conclusion that an account of Divine hiddenness in terms of the moral significance of the exercise of human freedom is a contributory but not a sufficient explanation of the degree of God's hiddenness. However, our point is not to give a full explanation of God's hiddenness, but merely to show the connection between this issue and the requirement of personal "space" which God's covenant relationship prescribes. Murray's and McKim's conclusion are adequate for our purposes. As regards Christian theology, Divine hiddenness or apophaticism, has to be balanced alongside the affirmation of God's character given in Special Revelation. Nonetheless, Special Revelation is itself ambiguous, in the sense that it is not universally epistemically imminent; it is not obvious to all. An explanation for this would also refer to the exercise of human freedom and agent defectiveness. This is consonant with the space that God makes for His creatures in His covenant. It is mirrored by Jesus' caution and scepticism about the fiduciary results of miracles or 'signs' (John.4.48; 14.11).

III.) Conclusion.

In part II of this Chapter it has been argued that a conception of the covenant as the ground for a loving personal relationship between God and His People, complements our discussion of revelation, helping to connect the doctrines of creation and redemption and

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[973] ibid., p.156.
[974] Murray, p.35; McKim, pp.155-156.

hence providing an important systematic context to this thesis. It has been maintained that from its inauguration with the people of Israel, the covenant as initiated by the Divine is personal, bilateral and involves the active participation of the human creature. The covenant is not a form of "cheap grace." In the Hebrew Scriptures conditions and obligations are attached to the covenant which are binding, default of which brings curses, and maintenance blessings. The New Covenant comes with the assurance of lasting forgiveness, but requires entry into the faith-relationship and obediential discipleship. Further, it has been argued that the doctrine of the covenant can directly address the *generating question*, by considering whether Christian experience in Scripture, in practice and experience, testifies to a God who acts in a covenantal manner as described above. My preliminary answer maintains that there are grounds for believing that God does indeed act in such a manner. If the case were comprehensively marshalled, my claim is that this would provide strong grounds for believing that the activity of the Spirit in bringing about Christian *metamorphosis* is compatible with human freedom and personal identity.

CHAPTER 9.

DISCERNMENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Earth is filled with heaven
And every common bush aflame with God.
But only he who sees takes off his shoes
The rest sit round it and pick blackberries.
(Elisabeth B. Browning)

The last systematic locus of contextualisation, the doctrine of the covenant, returned the discussion of the second half of my thesis directly to the Personalist model presented in Chapters 3 to 5. This reconvening of a direct examination of the Personalist model will be continued further by addressing the issue of how on this model the activity of the Spirit in Christian *metamorphosis* may be discerned. I shall begin by relating my line of enquiry to the traditional discussion of discernment (I). Section II will comment on how discernment of the Spirit is to be related to the other *hypostaseis* of the Trinity. From there the matter will be discussed in relation to the possibilities of *perception* of the Divine (III). Section IV will examine the importance of the cultivation of an appropriate *disposition* for discernment, and section V will present an account of how such discernment might take place. Section VI will explore an argument for the possibility of discernment from *retrospection*, and will reconsider again the Pauline emphasis placed on the fruits of the Spirit.

I.) Which Question of Discernment?

Discernment in the New Testament is wedded to the Holy Spirit; it is, in the language of St. Paul, the gift of the Spirit bestowing "the ability to distinguish between spirits"(I Cor.12.10-11). Often, it is paired with the gift of prophecy, as Cecil W. Robeck comments:

> It is the discernment *of spirits*. Most scholars suggest that the discernment to which Paul refers here is discernment of the *source* of prophetic claims. What spirit inspires the prophetic utterance? Is it the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, or is it some other spirit?[975]

Christian communities are exhorted by Paul to 'test everything' (*panta dokimazete*), especially regarding the prophecies received. A person and community may either be in a

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[975] Cecil W. Robeck, "Discerning the Spirit in the Life of the Church", in *The Church in the Movement of the Spirit*, eds. by W. Barr and R.M. Yocom (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994), p.33.

state where the Spirit is absent, in the dominion of the flesh,[976] or in a state of faith where the Spirit is present, aiding and guiding believers in conformity with Christ.[977] The Christian tradition has broadened this rather specific use of the concept:

> While discernment may be associated in the biblical tradition most specifically with prophetic words and inspiring 'spirits,' the expansion of the concept and the development of the practise of a more broadly defined 'discernment' is clearly consistent with the narrower description given by Paul's phrase, the discerning of spirits. Repeatedly the people of God are confronted with ethical, moral, and doctrinal choices.[978]

Thomas Aquinas certainly wanted to broaden the concept. For him moral discernment is the exercise of Christian wisdom rooted in the love of God, an imparted affinity or 'connaturality' with the Holy Spirit.[979] St. Catherine of Siena in her *Dialogues* describes discernment as a multifaceted phenomenon. It is true knowledge of the soul and God,[980] linked with charity and humility. It is a supernatural infusion into the soul, almost a supernatural entity in itself:

> Discernment is that which dissolves all darkness, dissipates ignorance, and seasons every virtue and virtuous deed. It has prudence that cannot be deceived...reaching as it does from heaven and earth, that is, from the knowledge of me [God] to the knowledge of oneself, from love of me to love of one's neighbors.... By this gentle glorious light the soul sees and rightly despises her own weakness; and by so making a fool of herself she gains mastery of the world, treading underfoot with her love, scorning it as worthless.[981]

St. Ignatius of Loyola provides rules for the discernment of Spirits in his *Spiritual Exercises* to aid us in examining the orientation of our affective states, our reason and conscience, and the preternatural influences upon them.[982] Etymologically the concept of discernment stems from the Greek word *krisis*, which refers to the moment when one is

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[976] Gal.5.19-21 cf. Rom.13.12.

[977] I Cor.12.3, cf. I Jn. 4.2-3; Rom.8.12-17. Michael Buckley interprets these as the "three relationships possible between Christians/a Christian community and the promised Spirit of God." M. Buckley, "Discernment of Spirit," *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*. ed. by Michael Downey (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1993), pp. 274 - 281.

[978] Robeck, p.34. The biblical examples Robeck gives are the following: Deuteronomy 30:19; Psalm 1:6; Jeremiah 21:8.

[979] See John Mahoney, S.J. "The Spirit and Moral Discernment in Aquinas", *Heythrop Journal*, Vol. 13 (1972), pp. 282 - 297.

[980] Catherine of Sienna, "Dialogues," in *Catherine of Sienna: The Dialogue*, trans. by Suzanne Noffke, O.P. (London: SPCK, 1993), Sc. 9.

[981] ibid, Sc. 11, p.44.

[982] For a good modern discussion of Ignatius text see, Michael J. Buckley, "The Structure of the Rules for Discernment," in *The Way of Ignatius Loyola: Contemporary Approaches to the Spiritual Exercises*. ed. by Philip Sheldrake (London: SPCK, 1991).

confronted by a choice. One then has to discern, that is *separate out* or make discrete, the nature of the elements of the choice and one's own response to it. In Christian terms it is to decide what is the best act of love of God in this situation, in this *crisis*.

The sense in which I want to use the concept of discernment, although related, does not mirror exactly any of the traditional definitions. The issue that concerns me is slightly different from the questions that initiated the traditional discussion of discernment. Hence, I will neither address the specific question of what is the source of a prophetic claim, nor the broader issue of how to discern the will of God in relation to this or that ethical dilemma. My question concerns the discernment of the indwelling (*menein*) of the Christian believer by the Holy Spirit. In attempting to develop a 'Personalist' model of the Divine-human it may be recalled that the negative analogy described by Rahner as the 'unthematic' work of the Spirit in the believer's life, or by Alston as the 'internality' of the work of the Spirit, was encountered.[983] This problem raised directly the question of how to discern the indwelling of the Spirit. My concern is not just with the discernment of the Holy Spirit in this context, but also with the question of *how* the Spirit is to be conceived to indwell the believer. I wish to connect the questions of 'who' and 'how.' *Who* is at work in this particular event and h*ow* may we identify the agent as the Spirit? Further, *how* does the 'who' relate to the human person? If the problem of 'internality'[984] cited above can be partially overcome, if a person can discern the personal relation of the Spirit, then this will further the case for holding that the indwelling of the Spirit is compatible with human freedom and identity in accord with the Personalist model presented.

St. Paul in his discussion of discernment talks of the *effects* of the Spirit, which can be taken as signs of the Spirit's presence, the so-called "fruits of the Spirit."[985] Such a focus is appropriate for Paul's concerns, namely, the external, public discernment of a prophecy

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[983] See above Chapter 4, section II. Out of the two descriptions of indwelling as 'unthematic' and as an 'internality', the latter is more open to misinterpretation. As Rahner's distinction between the categorical and transcendental, as well as his critique of, what he defines as, the theological position of 'extrinsicism' shows, the application of spatio-temporal categories to God or Divine action, even by implication, can result in dangerously distorted theologies. The concept of 'internality' has misleading spatio-temporal connotations that are unhelpful. The indwelling of the Spirit is neither just another object in the world, nor something bounded by the extent of a person's body. The concept of the 'unthematic' is never clearly defined by Rahner. It also seems to pre-empt the answer to the question that I am posing, viz., that the indwelling of the Spirit can never be discerned because it is *per definition* unthematic.

[984] See Chapter 4, "Negative Analogy II."

[985] See Rom.8.23; Gal.5.22ff.

within a Christian community. Would such a principle of discernment from the *effects* be of use to my general concern of discerning the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? According to this Pauline principle one could discern whether or not the Spirit indwells a person by assessing whether that person possesses any of the "fruits of the Spirit." However, this is of little help to my concern, for it is not just a question of whether or not the Spirit indwells a person, but *how* the Spirit does so. Discerning the effects of the Spirit, whether it be by the criteria of the fruits of sanctification, or of the building up of the Church (I Cor.12.7; 14.2), or of the confession of Jesus Christ as Lord (I Cor.12.3), does not tell us anything about *how* these effects are established (by some form of "infusion" as in Mediaeval Catholicism, or via Divine fiat, or as a result of the exchange that takes place in personal relationships?). We shall return to the subject of the fruits or effects of the Spirit later.

II.) Discernment of the Spirit and the Trinity.

An initial query concerning the very possibility of discerning the Spirit may arise from what we have earlier talked of as the "self-effacing" nature of the Spirit, "the Person without a face," in the words of Yves Congar.[986] This is because the Spirit is the one who mediates the person of Christ to people now, the "Go-between God," to use J.V. Taylor's phrase. Hence, the *content* of the Spirit's communication is christological, and the criteria of the discernment of the Spirit must likewise be christological. Divine communication takes place through God's incarnational activity in the world, and the Incarnation of the Son is the key to unlocking, and hence, discerning such activity. In short, the discernment of the Spirit is inalienably trinitarian, for one cannot talk of the Spirit other than by His relations with the other *hypostaseis* of the Trinity. The Spirit does not have a distinct "personality," this would be an anthropomorphism from western psychology, but shares a common will and power with the Father and Son. Rather the Spirit has a distinct *taxis* within the Godhead, and a distinct function in the Divine economy. The latter allows us to *appropriate* certain qualities and activities to the Spirit that are not as such proper to His being.[987] This is merely to retread steps taken in Chapters 1 and 6, and with it to reaffirm Augustine's principle of *opera sacrosanctae Trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisia*.

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[986] Congar, Vol.III, p.5.

[987] What is proper to the Spirit is His *taxis* within the Trinity, being sent from the Father and the Son, or *through* the Son, depending on one's stance towards the *Filioque*, and as acting as a bond between the Father and the Son. As for the Spirit's work in the economy of salvation Daniel Helminiak points out, "insofar as

III.) Perceiving God: Direct and Indirect Perception.

Although William Alston does not attempt to resolve the negative analogy of the "internality" of the indwelling of the Spirit in relation to a Personalist model, in his later monograph, *Perceiving God*, he appears to indirectly provide a way forward. The direct aim of the book is to produce an epistemology of religious perceptual belief. His thesis is that Christian mystical perception should be understood as a reliable, direct presentation or appearance of what is taken to be God by the subject of the experience, and not as purely subjective feelings or sensations that are subsequently given religious explanation.[988] I am not concerned with the development of this thesis, but in Alston's initial description of Christian mystical perception. Alston arrives at this thesis by examining selected accounts of Christian mystics and believers, in the same manner that William James analyses edited highlights of the mystics. "Mystical perception" is quite a narrow category and Alston is certainly not attempting to provide an account of all religious experience.[989] He identifies the problem we are attempting to address in this Chapter succinctly:

> [A]ccording to the Christian tradition the main significance of mystical perception is that it is an integral part of that personal relationship with God that is the fundamental aim and consummation of human life. Without God and me being aware of each other in a way that, on my side, is properly called 'perception', there could be no intimate relationship of love, devotion, and dialogue that, according to Christianity, constitutes our highest good.[990]

Notice the reference to the "personal" in the above. He talks here about perception as a crucial part of the interaction in the Divine-human relationship, which again re-enforces my belief that his claim that it is possible to perceive God would significantly overcome the negative analogy of "internality." Clearly, Alston holds that there are times when

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salvation actually occurs in any human being, it is a created effect and so is not proper to any of the Three alone but is common to all as the one Creator-God. Accordingly, the supposed work of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, is the work of God as One." Helminiak, p.187. Yet, latter he goes on to write: "[T]here is a connection between the Holy Spirit and the sanctification of humankind. That connection is found not in what is done *by the Holy Spirit* but in what is done by God *because* the Holy Spirit is sent by the Mother-Father and the Begotten One. "By the Holy Spirit" would entail efficient causality, disqualified by the *ad extra* rule. "Because of the Holy Spirit" suggests final causality. The mission of the Holy Spirit is that *because of which* God effects a transformation in the human. Because the Holy Spirit is sent to dwell in us, God creates in us the capacity to receive and respond to the Holy Spirit." ibid, pp.192-3

[988] Alston is not the first Christian thinker to compare religious experience with sense perception; John Henry Newman does so in his *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Ascent*, Chapter five.

[989] Alston, *Perceiving God*, p.34.

[990] ibid., p.12.

Christians do perceive God, and that means that the "internality" of God's operation does not obstruct recognition of His presence and communication to persons.

How does Alston explicate perception of the Divine? He recognises that the analogy with sense perception is not univocal: "though mystical perception is like sense perception in the fact of *presentation*, it is frequently utterly unlike it in content, at least in those numerous cases in which no awareness of sensory qualia is involved, no colors, sounds, smells, and the like."[991] He offers two challenges to doubters: "Why suppose that the possibilities of experiential givenness, for human beings or otherwise, are exhausted by the powers of *our* five senses? .... why can't we also envisage presentations that do not stem from the activity of any physical sense organs, as is apparently the case with mystical perception."[992] So whereas in sense perception we have a pattern of object -> sense organs -> qualia, in the case of God-perception we bypass the middle stage and move from the object of perception (God) to qualia in our minds. The perception is a form of mediate immediacy ("direct perception"),[993] defined as being an awareness "of X through a state of consciousness that is distinguishable from X, and can be made an object of absolutely immediate awareness, but is not perceived."[994] The mystical perception that Alston is interested in is not a form of "absolute immediacy", as he terms it, or unity of subject and object.[995]

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[991] ibid, pp.16-17. Alston does note later that sensory qualia of God are conceivable and draws upon the Lockean primary and secondary quality distinction to explain further such perception: "there is a long tradition that holds that secondary qualities like colors do not really characterize physical substances. Thus it is not inconceivable that God should appear to us as looking bright or sounding a certain way, even though He does not, in His own nature, possess any sensory qualities. ..... It may be that, given our proclivities, this would be the best way for Him to get a certain message across; just as, even if physical substances are not really colored, the system of color appearances enables us to make many useful distinctions between them." ibid., p.20. However, for Alston's purposes he is going to focus on non-sensory perception, because he considers it a better way of God presenting Himself. ibid..

[992] ibid, p.17.

[993] It is 'mediate' because the subjects of the experience can distinguish between their states of consciousness and the object of perception. Nonetheless, it is 'immediate' in the sense of a direct presentation of the object; it is not mediate perception whereby the primary object is perceived through a secondary object.

[994] ibid, p.22.

[995] He holds further that perception in general is, *contra* Kant, a non-intentional relationship and independent of conceptualisation and interpretation; X's appearing to S as such-and-such is 'fundamental' and 'unanalyzable'. Alston writes, "From the fact that we use a concept to identify something of a certain type, it does *not* follow that *what* we are identifying 'involves' concepts and judgements. If it did, we would be unable to classify anything but cognitive psychological states. From the fact that we use a concept to pick out cabbages as vegetables, it does not follow that cabbages are, have or use concepts." ibid., p. 41. He holds that a distinction must be drawn between direct awareness of X and awareness of X having some properties, the latter involves concepts and judgements the former does not. See page 55ff for an account of the 'unanalyzability' of Alston's theory of *appearing*.

Alston's case re-affirms the importance of the category of perception in religious life, but it will not solve in one go the negative analogy of 'internality.' A theological realist would be reluctant to challenge Alston's thesis, for it seems to hold true not only of some of the mystics, but also the figures of faith in the Bible. Even in the great theophanies in the Old Testament when the patriarchs were unable to see God's face, they still heard his voice. Yet as Samuel Terrien's study of the theopanies shows, a perceptual encounter with God may be characterised as an 'elusive presence':

> Presence perceived in an epiphanic visitation, a theophany, or the invaded solitude of a prophetic vision was 'swift-lived', yet the acceptance of the promise it carried transformed those who received and obeyed the command. Faded presence became a memory and a hope, but it burnt into an alloy of inward certitude, which was *emunah*, 'faith'. When God no longer overwhelmed the senses of perception and concealed himself behind the adversity of historical existence, those who accepted the promise were still aware of God's nearness in the very veil of his seeming absence. For them, the center of life was a *Deus absconditus atque praesens*.[996]

If we are to follow Terrien and hold that such mystical perception testifies to an "elusive presence," then Alston's account of mystical perception can hardly be thought to provide a satisfactory solution to the problem of "internality" The fact that a believer may *sometimes* perceive God directly cannot adequately do justice to the presence of a *continuous* relationship, which the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is said to be. This is surely one of the differences between pneumatological claims in the Old and New Covenant: the Spirit of God no longer dwells occasionally and particularly in a prophet or in the *Shekinah*, but is given to *all* who allow themselves to receive Him in Christ.[997] Let us suppose that mystical perception of God, as Alston describes it, safeguards human freedom and personal identity at the times when God is perceived. What about the interim period between perceptions?[998] If the Holy Spirit is meant to indwell the believer in these periods,

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[996] Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: Towards a New Biblical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), p.470. Bernard Zelechow from his reading of the Old Testament also confirms this picture: "The biblical God is from the first a present but receding God. This is the only way it could be once God decided to grant humankind the paradoxical gift of freedom with its bewildering dialectics of intentionality and conditionality, autonomous volition and heteronomous consequences from the human perspective." Bernard Zelechow, "God's Presence and the Paradox of Freedom", *Hermeneutics, the Bible and Literary Criticism*, eds. by A. Loades and M. McLain (London: Macmillan, 1992), p.166.

[997] See Eduard Schweizer, "On Distinguishing Between the Spirits," *Ecumenical Review*, Vol.41 (1989), p.413.

[998] Nelson Pike in his book, *Mystic Union*, argues that "union without distinction" in mystical experience is "not a distinct kind of mystical experience, but is instead, an interval in a more comprehensive experience,"

how can human freedom and identity be secured in the interregnum? It would be a mistake to suppose that the Spirit could only be active in sanctifying the believer, when God is somehow directly perceived.

By precisely focusing on a narrow category within religious experience, namely, mystical perception, Alston may be charged with distancing his account from the experience of the "average" Christian. Whatever the truth of such an assertion, my point is that Alston's account cannot explain the presence of the Divine in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which is continuous and not periodical. What the relation exactly is between Alston's two articles on the Spirit and his book *Perceiving God*, he does not declare. Indeed, his having treated the two questions in different places without association, suggests that a defence of mystical perception and an explication of pneumatological indwelling are separate issues for him. In sum, my response to Alston's account of mystical perception as regards the issue of "internality," is similar to my stance towards the Spirit's gifts of the *charismata*. The charismata may be interpreted as signs of the presence of God, but as long as they are not incorrectly interpreted as a necessary and sufficient sign of the Spirit's presence, then one can say that the charismata are temporary effects of the Spirit, and will not suffice as a description of the continued presence and relation of the Spirit in the believer. Likewise, mystical perception need not be the sole means of discerning the indwelling of the Spirit.

To consider how the indwelling of the Spirit may be more aptly discerned, we turn to the central issue of the nature of God. It is clear from general theistic principles that God is not a particular object, alongside other beings in the world. Hence, God cannot be discerned in the way in which spatio-temporal objects in the world are identified unless He chooses to reveal Himself, as He does so in the specific event of the Incarnation, or by acting in the world, what may be called His general *incarnational* activity. God's nature is, in the words of Aquinas, 'ubiquitous', transcendence in immanence:

> When one apprehends that God is *only* deeply immanent, in and containing all things, everywhere and nowhere, the 'substantial form', the inner reality of all things, 'more myself than myself', *because* not only not in space and time but not any thing or person, present in, containing, giving their whole life, form and reality to all things and persons by that presence *because* not

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which takes a subject-object form. Such an argument is not really applicable in the case of the indwelling of the Spirit, as "indirect" perceptual experience of the Spirit seems to better fit the case of indwelling. Hence, direct perception (*mediated immediacy*) would be the "interval" experience and not the other way around.

> any or all of them, one has totally excluded pantheism in the sense of any confusion of God and creatures, and this seems to me the only useful sense of 'transcendence', in positive theology.[999]

God's essence as the personal ground of being manifests itself through the subject-object framework of human perception as a whole, instead of being part of it. The Creator and creature cannot be separated out, dualistically, into two spheres or realms. Hence, the discernment of the Spirit's action in indwelling the human person is mediated by creation, and may be more appropriately described, in Alston's terms, as indirect perception. The Spirit is to be seen as a transcendent, yet immanent personal presence. Equally, the concept of "indwelling" does not refer to some 'inner' or 'outer' boundary that is the domain of the Spirit.[1000] When the Spirit is said to indwell a person it does not mean that the Spirit is somehow spatially inside that person, accessible only by some form of introspection. If the Spirit is beyond the categories of space and time, such a conception of indwelling is unsuitable. The Spirit is rather to be conceived of as active in and through the space-time continuum that is experienced and present within a person's subjectivity.

IV The Disposition Required for Discernment.

Simone Weil draws a distinction, which may be of some use, between implicit and explicit love of God.[1001] For Weil, we experience God's hiddenness, His absence, but she believed Him to be 'secretly' present, implicitly, yet *incarnationally*, in our neighbours, in nature, and in Christian rites.[1002] This is a dialectic of the absence of God as a categorical object of the world, yet at the same time, secret presence, which requires an appropriate stance or disposition to be perceived. Her account of our conversion to this stance, what she would call a state of "attention" or "waiting on God," is twofold. First, we experience the world as indifferent and unable to satisfy our desires. God is judged absent by the world's own terms, and we learn to become attentive to God by first being attentive to what God is not - a theological move which echoes Aquinas' *via negativa*. This Weil describes as a process

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[999] Hilary A. Armstrong, "The World in God", *Modern Churchman*, Vol.34 (1992), pp.10-15.
[1000] See Owen C. Thomas, "Interiority and Christian Spirituality," *Journal of Religion*, Vol.80 (2000), pp. 41-60.
[1001] S. Weil, "Implicit and Explicit Love of God," in *Waiting on God* (London: Collins, Fontana Books, 1959), p. 160.
[1002] Note that the experience of the presence of the Spirit here is not confined to internal-external dichotomy, whereby the Spirit's activity takes place in the interior realm of the soul. Rather the Spirit indwells my *experiences*, which include most importantly events that take place outside of my body, viz. what might be called the external world.

of renunciation and self-emptying. A degree of detachment is thereby achieved which creates the possibility of attending to a fantasy-free presence of God. It also provides the space for the growth of true love and desire for God. By loving our neighbour, for example, we indirectly love God who is present in them. We may add to this thought by saying that, conversely, when we experience, say, the love of another person, we are also experiencing God's love. For Weil implicit love of God acts as a preparation and grooming for explicit love of God. As Diogenes Allen writes:

> [God] does not come as a reward to those who have loved their neighbors and the universe. But the effect of loving them better and better is to turn us with increasing attentiveness to where God dwells, though he dwells there in secret. All that is needed for God to come to the soul is attentiveness to the places where he is - in our neighbor, in the universe, and, in religious ceremonies.[1003]

We are slowly weaned off our attachments to what is not of God in creation, renouncing the hope of gaining completeness by following the way of "gravity" alone, and training ourselves to be attentive to the secret presence of God in the world, in a process which for Weil is sanctification.

Gabriel Marcel helps to clarify the conditions for discernment. At the heart of the matter, what is needed is the participation or engagement of the human subject. To be able to experience a person, a 'thou', Marcel says that one has to be 'disposable' (*disponsible*);[1004] one has to be open and responsive to the 'thou.'

> We cannot dispose of a person unless we consider the person as an instrument which we employ, or look at *him* as a possible source of information we would like to have. We can never dispose of presence; if we treat persons as things over which we have a power of disposal, they will invariably withhold their presence from us. .... Availability [i.e. *disponsibilite*] is an opening upon the presence of another, not a way of access to certain goods he possesses. Marcel writes that the available person is capable of being entirely with me; the unavailable person only gives me a provisional loan on resources which lie at his disposal.[1005]

[1003] Diogenes Allen, *Three Outsiders* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 1983), p.121.

[1004] Marcel writes: "The French terms I use are *disponsibilite* and *indisponsibilite*. Literally, in English, one would have to render these as availability and unavailability, but it might sound more natural if one spoke of handiness and unhandiness, the basic idea being that of having or not having, in a given contingency, one's resources to hand or at hand." G. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being, Vol.1: Reflection and Mystery*, trans. by G.S. Fraser (London: Hanvill, 1950), p.201. He writes further: "It is essential to human life not only to orientate itself towards something other than itself, but also to be inwardly conjoined and adapted." ibid..

[1005] McCown, pp. 9-10.

Such openness is something that is also an ingredient of Weil's concept of attentiveness and is also to be found in Von Balthasar, with his concept of *Verfügbarkeit*.[1006] In Marcel's words, we have to "reverse the process of objectification," the idea that all reality can be experienced in discrete parts, just as any other object in the world. Marcel also provides us with an analysis of what makes us "unavailable" (*indisponsible*): being "encumbered by the self;"[1007] the anguish of a susceptibility which comes from self-concern;[1008] contracting behind the shell of one's fixed habits and way of thinking (*crispation*);[1009] and "moral ego-centricity."[1010] Orthodox Christian theology would encompass this in an analysis of sin, that which dislocates us from relationship with God, and especially the sin of pride.[1011] Marcel also explicates phenomena that are conducive to 'disposability,' namely, self-presence, receptivity and being welcoming. Self-presence is not very precisely defined by Marcel, but for our purposes it could refer to God's call to us to be our true nature in relation to him, in self-awareness and mindfulness. Marcel does connect self-presence with recognition of the other, so that both are mutually integral and constitutive,[1012] which

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[1006] For a survey of the different contexts that Von Balthasar employs this concept, see Raymond Gawronski, SJ., *Word and Silence. Hans Urs Von Balthasar and the Spiritual Encounter between East and West* (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1995), pp. 161 - 163. Gawronski writes: "Etymologically, it [*Verfügbarkeit*] carries the connotation of being at someone's disposal, and furthermore of being able to be moulded by the forming hand of another." ibid., p. 161. He goes on: "The disponsibility requires a constant vigilance, for it is never the case that the Christian has already 'heard' the Word of God.... In the Biblical vision, the apatheia which truly does belong to the human condition is transformed, lifted into the 'readiness to commitment to every role ordered by God in the play.' The epical moment is then taken up into the Christian drama precisely in this being ready - in an Ignatian indifference - to take on whatever role it is God assigns the person, an availability to mission." ibid., pp. 162 -3.

[1007] *Mystery and Being* Vol.1, p. 176. McCown comments: "An encumbered person literally cannot make room in himself for another. He is physically and emotionally incapacitated for response by the load of self-concern he carries.... Things are encumbering, because they get in the way; they interpose themselves between the self's presence to itself, and between the self and the presence of another." McCown, pp.11-12.

[1008] Again, McCown comments that this vulnerability is a "basic contradiction: between a need to possess, to annex everything, thus creating a monopoly over all available goods; and an obscure consciousness of an abyss opening within the self, a consciousness that, in spite of every attempt to fill up the abyss, the self still is nothingness." ibid, p.14. He adds, "The susceptible consciousness," in its zealous excessive self-consciousness, "projects its own feelings upon the other, and actually never reaches the other." ibid., p.15.

[1009]: "A coagulation of the life of the whole self around any particular adherence or manifestation of the self always means loss of sensitivity and a general devaluation of life." ibid, p.13. The ultimate example of the fixated or congealed (*figer*) man is the fanatic.

[1010] Marcel, *Homo Viato: Introduction to a Metaphysics of Hope*, trans. by Emma Crauford (London: Victor Gollancz, 1951), p.19. Marcel compares the egoist to the dreamer: action and its consequences are centred round the self's conception and not on reality or the other (ibid., pp. 22-23), and hence, there is no reflective interaction between the self and reality.

[1011] This is not altogether alien to Marcel who utilises the concept of "the Mystery," a relation where the boundary between self and what confronts it is not simply subject to our grasp, and refers ultimately to a theonomous ground to our being.See Bruce Campbell, "Can Prayer be Humanizing? Person and Prayer in the Thought of Gabriel Marcel," *Canadian Journal of Theology*, Vol.15 (1969), pp. 186-197.

[1012] *The Mystery of Being* Vol.1, p. 205ff.

returns us to the theme of intersubjectivity and the formation of the self.[1013] As regards receptivity, Marcel rejects a simplified empiricist conception as mere passive impression. Rather there has to be an active "readiness" and "preparedness" for a subject to welcome the other *to* something, which means, "putting our own house in order." As McCown explains:

> The human meaning of receptivity, then, is to introduce the other into a qualified (and privileged) zone of our experience or life, a region which is uniquely our own, which we have readied or prepared by investing something of ourselves in it..... At its center is an active element something like a power of taking upon ourselves or into ourselves...., or better still, the power of opening ourselves to.... Reception transcends the dilemma of activity versus passivity.[1014]

This reminds us of Levinas' discussion of the relation of autonomy and heteronomy, and the inseparable interdependence of self and Other. For our purposes at present what is to be affirmed is the active receptivity or disposition required for discernment, which is at the same time equally conditioned or initiated by the presence of the Other.

Another Christian thinker, from a very different school of philosophical theology, Austin Farrer, held the position that the manifestation of divine agency in nature, history and individual lives is only discernible to those with faith.

> Without the readiness of [initial] faith, the evidence of God will not be accepted, or will not convince..... [Initial] faith is the subjective condition favourable to the reception of evidence.[1015]

Diogenes Allen explicates this theme in Farrer:

> To open the heart is to allow what is in the domain of value, and in particular self-evaluation, to affect one. ..... [W]ithout a heart that is open 'the cosmic facts are dumb,' as Farrer puts it. What is crucial is *what we seek with*. This has priority over *where we look*, whether to nature, history or to Christ. Without an open heart nature and history are dumb and Christ is not given admittance.[1016]

If we are to discern the indwelling of the Spirit we need to be open, disposed towards and participative in the Spirit's activity. Then, through a process of spiritual maturation, as

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[1013] See Chapter 7 of this thesis.
[1014] McCowan, pp.19-20.
[1015] A. Farrer, *Saving Belief* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1964), p.18.
[1016] D. Allen, "Faith and the Recognition of God's Activity", in *Divine Action*, ed. B. Hebblethwaite and E. Henderson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), p.207.

Weil indicates, one becomes more attentive and sensitive to the working of the Spirit in one's life.

V.) An Account of Discernment.

If we are not going to attempt to describe an awareness of the indwelling of the Spirit solely in terms of Alston's mystical perception, is the indwelling of the Spirit inferred or an interpretative extrapolation? Is the experience of the Spirit simply based on an inference drawn from cumulative experiences of the world and ourselves? Hilary Armstrong seems to advocate this with a Thomist twist:

> We apprehend that God is always about the place, almost never directly encountered, but leaving tracks and signs of presence everywhere in the world, in vast diversity to match the God-given diversity of human creatures for whom they are intended.[1017]

To suggest that any experience of the Spirit is just a mere interpretation or inference does not seem to do justice to Christian experience. When a Christian experiences the beauty of nature, the love of their neighbour or friend and the sanctifying effect of religious worship, this is not commonly reported as an inference, a hypothesis of best explaination. The experience in its religiously mature form is an experience of the presence of the Spirit *through* nature, friends, community and worship.

Let us take an example.[1018] The caretaker at my church, who is not a believing Christian, said to me once that he very much enjoyed working amongst the church community and that he experienced a depth of love both flowing from him and coming from the community which he could not explain. He said that he was not the type of person who typically carries out such acts of love.[1019] Attempting to understand this experience from

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[1017] Armstrong, p.12.

[1018] Other examples are recorded in the work of the late Alister Hardy, such as this one: "Several times in my life I have been either very frightened or very unhappy or have been unable to see how my life could continue. At those times I have been able to put my trust in this calm love and sense of God, concentrate on what little I could do, and though it wasn't always pleasant and certainly I didn't go around in a bland euphoria, I was given strength I didn't have and things were accomplished and righted with a great kindness that had my gratitude, because I knew it was God's help, and not something I had done or something that would have come about anyway in the way the world works." A. Hardy, *The Spiritual Nature of Man* (Oxford: OUP, 1979), p.54. Here we seem to have a direct perception, the 'calm love and sense of God,' although not definitely, and, further, the citing of an effect of God's activity, namely, the psychological strengthening of the person.

[1019] This example is similar to one given in Alistair Hardy: "The guys still wear their hair long, but we're all like children when we talk about Jesus, we love him so much. ..... There's a love in me that's supernatural. I never could love people as I do now with Jesus in my heart." Hardy, p. 59.

the frame of reference that I have put forward, one could say that the caretaker experienced implicitly the love of God. This was not a perception of the Spirit as a distinct entity, but was experienced through his perceptions of himself and the community. One cannot isolate an element of categorical experience, to use Rahner's term, which represents the Spirit: "To prove such a thing would necessitate being able to distinguish within the experience between the divine element and the spatio-temporal wrapping..... such an attempt is doomed to failure."[1020]

In the example cited above, what was of note was the *excess* of love, according to the caretaker, and this *excess* was not experienced explicitly as the Spirit's love, but again, was experienced in and through the events of his relationship with the community. It was not something simply *inferred*, though concepts and contexts were not absent, it was to refer to Alston's term *presented*. This mediated perception of the Divine has some "weight" or "heaviness," as Emmanuel Levinas metaphorically describes it. By this Levinas wishes to capture something intrinsic to the nature of personal relations: one cannot reduce the other person to a series of representations; a surplus always remains. There is a surplus to the representing consciousness of Husserlian phenomenology and it is in this surplus, this "overloading of phenomenology,"[1021] that the overflowing, ecstatic love of the Divine may be found. In the words of the poet R.S. Thomas, "There is nothing too ample/ for you to overflow, nothing/ so small that your workmanship/ is not revealed."[1022] The fact that a person may be able to discern this "excess" or "weight" in his experience, as something which is not simply self-generated, or explicable by the categorical objects that one perceives, gives the experience the quality of something presented "over and against" the mind of the subject. Even though this may not be an explicitly recognised perception of the Divine, the fact that it has this "sign" embedded within the experience, the "weight" or "excess," acts as a kind of mark of recognition. This corroborates the view that, although the Divine may not be as we are in either nature, being incorporeal, or mode of operation, His presence may still be recognised, supporting the idea of Divine-human relationship and Divine respect for the human subject.

[1020] Gabbya, p.258.

[1021] Richard Cohen uses this turn of phrase to describe Levinas' philosophy. R. Cohen *Elevations: The Height of the Good In Rosenweig and Levinas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p.180n.13. Levinas writes "The trace will be the indelibility of being...its immensity incapable of being enclosed in itself and somehow too great for discretion, for interiority, for a Self." Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p.45.

In the cases of indirect perception of God, which I have given, the object of perception that can be isolated within the *subject/consciousness/object* framework of experience[1023] appears at first glance to be a categorical, space-time object, for example, the loving behaviour of people, or the beauty of nature. Yet the experience cannot be reduced merely to the perception of a categorical object, for the *quality* of experience is such that mediated through the *consciousness/object* structure is an experience of an "excess of love," which one is enabled to perceive by one's attentive and open disposition. From the vantage point of a faith commitment, such an experience may be explicitly recognised as coming from the Divine. Hence, the caretaker, even though he lacks explicit faith, has enough openness of heart to discern that there may be something more to the experience, and someone with full-blown faith will experience the occurrence, explicitly, as an event of Divine love.

By emphasising the category of the *quality* of an experience, its "excess" or "weight," it is not intended to reduce religious experience or life to the class of *feeling*, as some might claim that the early Schleiermacher does. For a start, what is given in the *quality* of the experience is not a self-generated feeling, but is experienced as stemming from another source distinct from the self, hence the appropriateness of the category of presentation and indirect perception. Note too, that in the case of the caretaker the experience consists not simply of an isolated experience of love, which has been termed "excess." The experience is complex, mediated by a creaturely reality, the loving behaviour of the Christian community, and assessable from a Christian epistemological framework. Thus, Scripture tells that God is to be experienced through others and commands us to love one another. It also tells us of how true love is to be recognised and that God is love.

Let us consider two other cases of mediated perception of the Divine, which may appear more explicitly Christian. Many in the Protestant tradition would see Scripture expounded in preaching as a central event in a person and community's relationship with God. According to Karl Barth, for example, preaching is a means of God speaking and acting,

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[1022] R.S. Thomas, *Collected Poems 1945-1990* (London: Phoenix Giants, 1993), p.296.

[1023] Keith Yandell in his work on religious experience distinguishes between two different types of structure of experience: *subject/content* experience, such as "I feel tired"; and *subject/consciousness/object* experience, for instance, "My hand is aching". K. Yandell, "Religious Experience", *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, eds. by P.L. Quinn & C. Taliaferro (Oxford: Blackwells, 1997), pp. 367 - 73.

and thus, preaching has value only insofar as it concurs with and is appropriated by the Word of God. The Word of God is not conceived of as being a static *datum*, like an object at a person's disposal, but the living act and event of God freely willing to reveal Himself to His creatures.[1024] The event of preaching, it might be claimed, is experienced as being "personally addressed," which Barth articulates in terms of the particular act of God addressing an individual through the proclamation of the Gospel. One may feel that a classic novel addresses one personally, that is it provokes thought about one's situation or state. If that is all that is meant in the case of preaching, then, the experience remains rather two-dimensional. However, as Barth points out hearing the Word is not simply about our own personal and private wrestling with the meaning of Scripture and its application to ourselves. It is about meeting the living Christ, His call, reconciliation, judgement, forgiveness, through the power of the Spirit.

Do the categories of direct or indirect perception apply here? Unless a person is aware of hearing Divine words, the experience seems to fit best the indirect model, for the Divine address is mediated by the words of Scripture and the preacher. Barth is keen to emphasise that the creaturely mediation of both the form of Scripture and the Church's proclamation in preaching, are in themselves not the Word of God. Again, it is only by grace, in the power of the Holy Spirit, that they may be transformed into the Word of God.[1025] In short, what distinguishes the hearing of the Word through the proclamation of Scripture from reading a classic novel is that there is, "when and where God pleases," a personal presence behind the words that addresses the person.[1026] This is not to be simply identified as one of the categorical facts that are experienced (a *datum* e.g. the words, the sound, etc.), but a presence that may quite evocatively be described as a "weight" or "excess."

One should also mention the Eucharist as another paradigm example of Divine incarnational activity after the resurrection. The bread and wine function as symbols within the web of meaning of the Christian narrative, and hence, receive new meaning in the Christian community. To leave matters there at the level of symbol would again be

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[1024] *Church Dogmatics* I/1, p. 79; I/2, pp.1ff.
[1025] *Church Dogmatics* I/1, pp. 79ff, 98ff, 122ff.
[1026] Note that what is said above does not rule out the possibility of the novel, in the right context, from becoming a form of mediation of the Divine presence.

two-dimensional. One must include the living action of the Christ through the Spirit, symbolised in the liturgy by the *epiclesis*:

> The bread and wine are not merely tokens or signs of Christ, pointing to him and reminding us of him. Rather, with a sovereignty and freedom that now belong to his glorified body, he identifies himself with the bread and the wine. He uses them to embody and express his eternal giving of himself to the Father and to us.[1027]

This is the "weight" and "excess" that the symbols and liturgy have. The personal presence is dependent for its expression on the relational web that is the interaction between the Divine presence through the symbols and signs, and the disposition of the worshipping community. If the congregation approaches with faith and love the symbols are allowed to work, to mediate the deeper personal presence, and there is real exchange and reciprocity. John McKenna re-enforces this point when he argues that full presence is dependent upon an inter-personal environment of openness, reciprocity and love.[1028]

> [E]ven the personal presence of Christ offering himself to his Father and to us does not constitute presence in the fullest sense, since presence to be fully personal must be reciprocal. The Church must also respond by opening up to Christ's gift of himself. Otherwise we do not have presence in its fullest sense.[1029]

The Eucharist encapsulates our model of the activity and discernment of the Spirit, mediated through creaturely reality, within the context of the Christian narrative and community, and expressing the personal presence of the Divine experienced as an "excess" or "weight" within this relational dynamic. The experience of the Divine presence as "excess" or "weight," is not something that is experienced on every occasion that a person attends the Eucharist, and lack of such an experience does not invalidate the Eucharist. It may be that the disposition of the believer is such that attentiveness to the Divine presence is lost, or the mediation, the liturgy for example, is poorly executed. How the event is experienced is not the key point. After all, the experience of “excess” or “weight” is only a sign, or as Levinas would say, a "trace" of the Divine, that points to a reality that may never be contained by experience.

[1027] John H. McKenna, C.M., "Eucharistic Presence: An Invitation to Dialogue," *Theological Studies*, Vol. 60 (1999), p.311,

[1028] "On the deepest level this kind of presence involves love, because only in a climate of love can people reveal themselves as they are." ibid, p.307.

[1029] ibid, p.312.

VI.) An Argument from Retrospection and Spiritual Maturity.

"There is an unseen
power..... We never catch
him at work, but can only say,
coming suddenly upon an amendment,
that here he has been."
(R.S. Thomas, "Adjustments")[1030]

R.S. Thomas captures the elusiveness and extraordinary work of the Spirit, and suggests that the Spirit's indwelling may often best be discerned from retrospect. The analogy with interpersonal human relations may be re-introduced at this point. People are often unable to discern the goal and intentions of the action of another person. Take a case of unrequited love. The tragedy for the unrequited lover is often that the beloved is unable to recognise the gestures of love made towards him by the lover. Retrospectively the beloved might be able to discern the movement of the other towards him. Broken relationships are often caused by a lack of sensitivity towards each other, and an inability to read actions and apprehend the real intentions of the other. This provides at least an analogy with the problem of 'internality,' if we take it to be a question of hiddenness and lack of recognition of personal presence. The Spirit as incorporeal is not externally recognisable, but neither are people's goals and intentions always grasped and appreciated.[1031] Both require sensitivity and attention to discern them. Such perception comes with maturity of judgement, and may be retrospective. Some form of counselling may help somebody understand with greater accuracy their own motivations in the past and their relationship with others. Analogously, with growing sensitivity to the indwelling of the Spirit a believer may be able to discern the love of God in their life hitherto. One may in the process procure the services of a spiritual director, someone who possesses maturity of judgement, to aid as a guide. In Weil's terms, what is implicit may become explicit.

It is at this point that Paul's conception of the fruits of the Spirit can best be appropriated. The fruits of the Spirit are not just intentional states of a person, whether Divinely given or not. If we take the case of the caretaker once again, the extraordinary love which he found in his life is both an intentional state, he becomes more loving, and also, *primarily* an experience of love coming from the personal presence of God, mediated through other

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[1030] Thomas, *Collected Poems*, p.345.

people. There is a created effect or fruit in the person, say love, which is a gift given through experience of the Divine presence in and through the world. The fruit in the person may, therefore, act as an aid to the retrospective discernment of the Spirit, for it testifies to the Spirit's presence and action. Equally the opposite qualities to the fruits of the Spirit may testify to a lack of openness and disposability to the Spirit's presence in one's life. This leaves the question of whether an intentional state is the fruit of the Spirit or not, which is not the issue we are directly addressing, but is treated in standard accounts of discernment. Such accounts would contain criteria for discernment. Does revelation testified to by Scripture support this experience or state? Has the experience been subjected to examination by the Christian community and mature Christians within that community (e.g. a spiritual director)? Is this experience at least not in contradiction with what we already know about the world?[1032]

In this Chapter, it has been argued that the indwelling of the Spirit, given the nature of God as transcendent personal spirit and the inadequacy of human receptivity, is often an elusive presence. The parallel with sense perception is both enlightening and equivocal. God is not an empirical/categorical object, but the perceptual experience of God is strongly testified to in Christian experience. Some Christians perceive God directly, in a mediated immediacy. Perhaps the majority of Christians perceive God only indirectly, in a mediated form of perception, through the events of the world and in religious practice. No privilege or priority is attributed to this distinction: those who experience God directly are not *de facto* part of a spiritually elite body of Christians. For both types of perception, the disposition of the perceiver is vital. Openness, attentiveness, a maturity of faith and spiritual judgement, are all conditions of reception. The input of both types of perception gives the Christian an experience of God, which is acquired cumulatively, and grows with spiritual maturity.

In the case of mediated perception God works incarnationally, in and through the world, in and through our *subject/consciousness/object* framework, drawing creation towards its eschatological perfection. The Spirit's presence is often signified by a "weight" or "excess"

[1031] Indeed, on a dualist account of mental states, a person's intention is also intrinsically incorporeal and only mediated via the body.
[1032] Grace Jantzen, "Mysticism and Experience," *Religious Studies*, Vol.25 (1988), pp. 295-315.

within this framework. Thus, the activity of the Spirit may be identified as a mediated presence, whose recognition is dependent upon the disposition of the beholder, and discerned through an application of the standard Christian epistemological criteria for discernment, and often from retrospect. If this is the case, and the indwelling of the Spirit may in part be discerned, an interactional model of the Divine-human relationship, such as the Personalist model presented in this thesis, does have considerable explanatory efficacy and remit.

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION.

Can you think what it would be like to live the rest of one's life in a new way? Oh, to wake up some fine, clear morning feeling as if you'd started living all over again, as if the past was all forgotten, gone like a puff of smoke. To begin a new life -. Tell me, how should I begin? Where do I start?[1033]

New life in Christ and the Spirit is the Gospel of Christianity. The purpose of this thesis has not been to envision the nature or content of Christian transformation, but to conceive of how it is possible given what we know of God, the world and ourselves. Christian *metamorphosis* ought not to be treated as the stuff of dreams, and theologians have a service to perform in treating issues of human freedom and identity seriously, to offset any such suspicions. Certainly *metamorphosis* does not take place in a puff of smoke. This thesis has offered a primary model and some lines of argument to help us conceive of how Christian *metamorphosis* does take place. "Where do I start?" One begins with an acceptance of the personal presence of God in His initiative towards His creatures, which invites us to enter into a personal relationship with Him in reverence, surrender and obedience.[1034] The Spirit is the mediator of God's personal presence and His ecstatic love, and the one who enables our own response in love, in the return of love to the Father and the Son. The Spirit's love conjoins with ours when we love our neighbour and share in the love of the Christian community. "To live the rest of one's life in a new way," on the Christian vision is to participate ever increasingly in the ecstatic love of the Trinity.

When the generating question of this thesis was first formulated it was noted that for many theologians "there is no solution which is rationally coherent," and as a result resort is made to a "not unattractive and not unholy" form of agnosticism or paradox.[1035] Robert Jenson, it will be recalled, remarked that, "it may well be doubted that there is any vantage from which thus to observe the entities God and creature, so as to be able to describe the process between them." This was considered to be a pre-emptory closure of the generating question, as the Spirit-believer relationship can be related to the areas of provisional

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[1033] Anton Checkov, "Uncle Vanya," *The Oxford Checkov, Vol.III*. trans. by R. Hingley (London, OUP, 1964), p.60.
[1034] These attitudes are taken from John Oman who argues that, "The beginning is right reverence, not right resolve, because, above every other test of us, what we are able to honour is, in our deepest hearts, what we are, and, in our ultimate attainment, what we shall be." Oman, p.78.
[1035] McIntyre, p. 247, cf. pp. 186, 190.

human knowledge, such as our intuitions concerning freedom and identity, and knowledge of God given in the Incarnation. This may not give us a transcendent vantage point, but it gives us some kind of viewing point. Granted this provisional knowledge, the generating question can be seen to enquire about what the conditions of the very possibility of Christian *metamorphosis* are. In assessing the fruits of this study we should be attentive to where, if anywhere, paradox remains.

It may also be recalled that the Prolegomena set out a brief outline of the reasons why a trinitarian doctrine of God gave us *prima facie* grounds for holding that the generating question could receive a positive treatment. The doctrine of the Trinity classically maintains that personal particularity and distinctness is to be found within the being of God Himself, the triune communion of the three *hypostaseis* in ecstatic love. It was reasoned that if God acts towards His creatures in a way that is consonant with His own being, then God would act in a fashion that seeks to safeguard human particularity and distinctness, while purposing personal union in relationship. The Spirit both *ad intra* and *ad extra* acts as "go-between," in a mediatorial and unitive "contact function." We also noted that Richard of St. Victor's analysis of the ecstatic love of the Trinity had some analogy with interpersonal human relations. The second challenge of our Prolegomena is to examine whether such trinitarian analogies are borne out. If they are then this would be an example of the employment of what Colin Gunton calls "trinitarian controls."[1036]

The reasons why one could not rest content from the outset with a "not unattractive and not unholy" agnosticism or paradox can be seen from the conclusions of the second Chapter. Too often the neglect of the generating question of this thesis has resulted in a "Divine Fiat view" of Christian *metamorphosis*, which overlooks the integrity of the human subject. In the context of Christian doctrine, the model presupposes a too radical division, as regards Christian anthropology, between created goodness and redeemed humanity, created freedom and redeemed freedom. Such a discontinuity results in a position whereby created humanity is bypassed in the move to redeemed humanity. It also has a further defect in its connection to the doctrine of God, for it forces us to posit a distinction between God, the Creator and Redeemer. This leads to a form of Gnostic dualism. An alternative to the Divine Fiat view must have explanatory scope to reconcile

our common intuitions concerning human freedom and identity with the conception of Christian freedom liberated by the Spirit.

Chapter 2 also directed us towards an account that is psychologically plausible, which describes Christian *metamorphosis* in a way that does justice to human *qualitative* (subjective) and *numerical* identity and moral responsibility. We are also seeking an account that finds unity between the end and the means of the action of the Spirit. If the end is personal communion with the triune God, then a consistent means would also have to be personal. In terms of our "trinitarian controls," the Divine Fiat view operates primarily with a one-way not an interactive view of the Divine-human relationship. It threatens to destroy or dissolve human particularity, not enhance it, and hence, it does not create the basis for true exchange or perichoresis. In sum, the "trinitarian controls," alongside the other arguments marshalled, do not favour the "Divine Fiat view."

The specific *Personalist model* proposed in Chapters 3 and 4, safeguards human freedom and identity, by conceiving of Divine-human interaction along the lines of an extended analogy with interpersonal human relationships. The first and initiating element is the challenge and encounter by the ecstatic love of the personal presence of God, mediated through the events of the world, the Church, Scripture and the love of one's neighbour. It is an affective presence, but not one that determines the nature of its effects. A human person may remain unaffected as a result of their initial disposition and their response to the presence. Hence, God's presence cannot be said to affect directly in a way that bypasses mediation and the human person's contribution, whether tacit or explicit, as to how one is affected and how one responds. As John Oman writes: "Grace... is never a mere direct line of power, passing through us with impersonal directness, as light through window-glass, but is a curve of patient, personal wisdom, encircling and embracing us and all our concerns."[1037]

A person may *tacitly* contribute in the sense of having a prior disposition, which has been formed partly through his or her own past action and reflection. Explicitly a person may recognise how she is affected and attempt *post facto* to change her disposition towards and

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[1036] Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, p.78.
[1037] Oman, p.159.

perception of the affecting object. Moreover, once any immediacy of encounter has passed, a person may respond to being affected in different ways. As John Oman remarks, Divine grace and the human will may be "conflicting forces."[1038] This has to be a possibility if creatures are to have relative autonomy, or what Oman calls, "moral independence." Yet, Divine and human will need not be in conflict. Oman argues that God does not overcome this possible and real conflict between the Divine and human by an exercise of power, but "by accepting it."[1039] Through the patient offering of Himself to us, God actively waits upon our response. "The blessedness of God's rule," writes Oman, "is not less, but more God's personal gift, because it takes the trouble to pass round by way of our own personal acceptance and co-operation."[1040]

Once the person responds in openness and acceptance to the personal presence of the Divine initiative, the subsequent relationship with the Divine activates and enables a process of personal exchange (Charles Williams) or 'reciprocal identification' (V. Brummer), ideas which have their roots in the trinitarian concept of *perichoresis*. As R.C. Moberly comments, this is the nature of true freedom:

> This is what free will means. In its perfectness it is the self become another. It is Christ in the man. It is the man become One Spirit with Christ. It is the love of God reproduced in the man, till the man, in God's love or God's love in man, has become a Divine response, adequate to, because truly mirroring, God.[1041]

The process of personal exchange respects the distinctness of each party. Thus, the gradual identification of the human with the Divine "requires us to find God's world also our world and His mind our mind and His service our service."[1042] It is this process of sanctification, or deification (*theosis*) to use the Orthodox concept, which is the main vehicle of *metamorphosis*. It is in this state of exchange and sharing of ecstatic love that what has been considered to be the irreconcilable poles of Divine grace and sovereignty, on the one hand, and human identity and relative autonomy, on the other, are brought together in a way that enhances the particular identity of the creature, rather than forsaking it. As Oman

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[1038] ibid..
[1039] ibid..
[1040] ibid., p.153.
[1041] Moberly, p. 227.
[1042] Oman, p. 83.

writes, "Our dependence and independence are no more alien, but are united in equal marriage." They are so, because they have become mutually re-enforcing.

Despite the negative analogies relating to physical immediacy and desire, romantic love was seen to be an important interpersonal analogue that captured the themes of death and new life integral to Christian *metamorphosis*. In the face of the initiative of the Other there must be recognition of one's own vulnerability, need and readiness. The approach of the Other stimulates the new life of the movement and intensification of consciousness. From one's vulnerability and openness to the Other stems a willingness to allow the boundaries of the self to be partially deconstructed or de-centred and hence enlarged. One is both in a drawn out by the Other in the *ecstasis* of exchange, but also, following the insight of Richard of St. Victor, conjoined in love of a third. As Charles Williams understood, the pattern of love found in trinitarian relations and the atonement shapes the Divine-human relations in appropriation of salvation. The initiating love of God the Father in sending the Son and the Spirit, provokes a movement of exchange or *perichoresis*, in which the Spirit when permitted removes, in co-operation with the human (*synergia*), the impediments to the further movement of exchange. This second stage involves a continuation of the pattern established in the opening stage, namely, the gradual re-ordering of one's first and second-order desires, with second-order desires sanctioning any Divine action to remove sinful impediments to their execution. In broader terms this constitutes a re-centring of the self in Christ, through a de-centring of the self from the power of sin. As Miroslav Volf sums things up: "The Spirit enters the citadel of the self, de-centers the self by fashioning it in the image of the self-giving Christ, and frees its will so it can resist the power of exclusion in the power of the Spirit of embrace."[1043]

The key negative analogy of this Personalist model is the ontological asymmetry between God and the creature. This is why non-personal metaphors are often used of the Spirit (Chapter 6), for they function analogically, to protect the Creator-creature distinction from anthropomorphic compromise. They are compatible with a personal being, as the operations and functions described under those metaphors are primarily personal. The asymmetry of the Divine-human relationship has an analogue in the asymmetry of human relationships relating to the uniqueness of the revelation of the Other (Chapter 4).

Moreover, the Divine act of Self-revelation is one of condescension. The ontological distinction between Creator and creature requires us to accept that Divine and creaturely agency are not to be assessed on the same scale, or are in competition, as in a zero sum game. Rather Divine agency grounds human agency, respects it, and works to enable it. This asymmetry is also behind the negative analogy of the "internality" of the activity of the Spirit, viz. the difficulty of identifying the Spirit's action and presence. It was argued in Chapter 9, that the Spirit's activity may be discerned by applying christological criteria to the question of identification, cultivating the appropriate disposition to be attentive to the Spirit's operation, and discernment through spiritual maturity and retrospection. The Spirit's personal presence is mediated through creation, Scripture, the Church, worship, and the love of one's neighbour, providing an "excess" or "surplus" to one's experience of the categorical world.

The asymmetry of the Creator-creature relationship is also maintained by affirming that *metamorphosis* primarily requires a voluntary Divine initiative. The creature exercises no choice over this gratuitous initiative, at this stage, which would neither be relevant (why should one have choice over the personal approach of the Other?) nor feasible given the effects of sin. In this first movement human agency is passive, all be it a passivity which includes the partial activity of reception. The Divine initiative in the Spirit, following the way of the Incarnation, is that of *personal presence* which *encounters* and *challenges* His creatures to respond to His love and to seek fulfilment in relationship with Him. The Divine personal presence is also one of *acceptance* of the sinful creature, the creation of a "space of empathy," vividly testified to in the Incarnation. The human response is to mirror the Divine *acceptance* of the human by beginning to accept oneself, both as a creature loved by God, whose unity is found in Him, and as dislocated from God by sin. Repentance and gratitude are the right responses to the Divine initiative. At the same time, it is an acceptance which is a form of self-renunciation (deconstruction/de-centering/ decreation of the ego), for what needs to be acceded to is that *metamorphosis* stems from God's direction and orientation (conclusions of Chapter 3).

Hence, the human response is not the pure activity of the autonomous "I," but a *passivity-activity* complex, which requires the passivity of reception. It is a response that is never

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[1043] Volf, p. 92.

outside of relationship with the Divine. To respond is just to move with, instead of against, the Divine movement towards the human, in other words, to enter a Divine-human exchange. The *metamorphosis* is personal as it is truly interactive, requiring the mutuality of response to the Divine initiative. All this mirrors the initial primacy of the passive constitution of human agency, which is dependent upon a "given" world, the intersubjective grounding of language, society and culture, and ultimately the Creator God, all of which go to form the intrinsic properties of human agency. Nonetheless, even primitively there is a dialectic of passivity and activity, dependence and independence. We interact with the world that nourishes and forms us, just as we respond to and appropriate God's love. As John Oman remarks: "We are not independent, as though we could ride over reality; but, also, we are not dependent, as though reality could simply ride over us."[1044]

Chapter 5 considered how, if we are partially responsible for the way we respond to an affecting personal presence, the human person is able to respond to the Divine initiative despite the effects of sin. Two elements enable the creature to bridge the effects of sin. First, as we have noted, there is the Divine initiative of the affecting personal presence of God. Secondly, appeal was made to a concept of a latent true nature (LTN), which refers directly to the potentialities granted to a person at creation as part of the Creator's intended destiny for humankind, namely, to be recipients of Divine Self-communication and participants in the communion of the Kingdom of God. The potentialities of this LTN may be promoted or actively suppressed and disorientated by human action, although they are never fulfilled outside of the grounding relationship with the Divine. Thus, the model proposed holds that when the Divine personal presence is encountered it may activate and affect the LTN, depending upon the prior actions and choices of that person. The state of LTN once activated may, to employ Frankfurt's theory of the hierarchy of the will, generate a second-order desire to respond to God's presence. This process of exchange and 'reciprocal identification' should lead to the gradual actualisation of the ideal potentiality latent in one (LTN), which Divine love's cleansing of the "doors of perception" allows one to envision.

[1044] Oman, p.65.

The self despite the acceptance of the Divine initiative may be divided and remain so, because of the efficacy of sin. One may have sinful first-order desires that prevent the second-order desire, to respond to the Divine presence, from being executed. Alternatively, one may have competing second-order desires that create a state of mental impasse or quiescence. Here, following the suggestion of Stump, it was argued that the Divine may intervene to re-orientate the impeding mental states, as long as there is a second-order desire, intrinsic to that person, which would desire this to be the case. For the Divine to play such a role in re-orientating the human personality would be consonant with the LTN that God bestowed at creation. Such an account captures the Spirit's action as *enabling* human nature, and balances the Divine initiative and action on the one hand, with the importance of the human person maintaining some sort of ownership of her reorientation, by a response stemming from an *intrinsic* principle within the human mind.

In overview, Christian *metamorphosis* of a person is generated by a change in relational structure, as shown by Paul's understanding of new creation as a transition of creatures from one power, namely, sin, chaos and futility, to the new dominion of Christ. This constitutes a restoration of creatures' grounding relationship with God, a re-ordering of creation after the dislocation and exclusion of sin, and a drawing of creatures towards their eschatological destiny of full communion of creation with the Creator. New creation does not refer to a change of numerical identity. The faithful still possess a continuous numerical personal identity. In contrast to classical apocalyptic thought, the new world does not come about after the destruction of the old. At the level of *qualitative* identity, change within the personality takes place as a process of sanctification through reciprocal identification in ecstatic love. Although, the new relational order is ontologically continuous with the old order, the new relational matrix of God and His redeemed creation determines what kinds of things exist and their nature. Hence, the change of relational structure does have ontological import, and is not something confined to psychological identity, viz. changes within a person's personality. This is seen in John's insistence that only those who possess faith will have eternal life. Faith in God in this world determines the *quid sit* in the eschaton.

From Paul we have the insight that the resurrected will have "spiritual bodies"(I Cor.15), in some way continuous with earthly bodies, yet not exactly the same kind of thing, hence

a "spiritual" rather than a fleshly body. As Isaiah's vision sets out, the ontological change of the eschatological fulfilment of new creation is seen in interlocking cosmological as well as social and cultural spheres (65.17-25). The biblical language of incorporation refers to ontology at this relational level, as Charles Williams calls it, the "great web" or "co-inherence of all life." The new creation will be free of the futility of death and destruction. Thus, the life-threatening forces represented by wild animals will be transformed into benign and harmonious co-existence. These relational changes of reforming and reshaping creation at multi-dimensional levels are all pivoted on a new closeness and presence of God to his creation: "I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people"(Isa.65.19). This may be compared to Paul's emphasis on the presence of the Spirit as the Divine agent of recreation in Romans 8.

Part two of the thesis employed a method of systematic contextualisation, aimed at placing the generating question within the context of relevant loci of Christian dogmatics: creation and conservation, the image of God, providence, revelation and finally the doctrine of the covenant. This had the purpose of pursuing coherence within systematic theology and to qualify remaining negative analogies concerning the Personalist account. Thus the asymmetry found in the Divine-human relationship is set within the context of God's agency as Creator and Conserver, and hence the ground of human agency. As a result, human freedom/identity can never be interpreted in 'isolation' from the Divine. Moreover, God's intent of Self-communication is *embedded* within creation from the start and is also its goal. Divine activity is an interplay, one might say, between *special* action in the foreground of salvation history, such as the Incarnation, and the constant Divine relation to His creation in the hinterland or horizon. The thread running through the different forms of Divine activity is the Divine purpose embodied in the covenant, which is itself the meaning and basis of creation, and is made explicit in God's special acts, first through the Hebrew prophets and then in the Incarnation of the Son. God's character is revealed in this way, and hence God's behaviour may be practically judged to see if it is worthy of trust and of personal commitment.

There was a second purpose of the strategy of systematic contextualisation, namely, to discern whether through all the different levels of Divine agency - *creatio continua*, *concursus divinus* and *providentia* - there could be found a pattern. It was held that

creation involves a dialectic of separating out (distinction/ differentiation) and binding (communion/interdependence), of establishing relative autonomy and dependence. Likewise in respect to concurrentism (*creatio continua*), God's agency was primary and grounding, but also self-effacing in enabling created reality to participate in the causal process with integrity (secondary causation). A similar pattern was noted regarding the doctrine of providence. God is also the ultimate cause of the way things are ordered, or the way things come about: some necessarily through necessary causes and others contingently through contingent causes. The dialectic of contingency and necessity allow for the causal integrity of creatures. This view is complemented by the insights of modern science, which lead us to suppose that the world God has made is built upon reliable distributions of undetermined events in probabilistic patterns. God's providential action affects the course of events in the world by acting at crucial junctures to determine otherwise undetermined events within the bounds of natural probabilities. Thus, God's *providentia* actualises particular possibilities offered by the world process. Nonetheless, God's activity will be constrained by respect for the integrity of the natural order and by regard for human freedom.

Analogously, it has been argued in this thesis that the Spirit-human relation in Christian *metamorphosis* although *initiated* by the Divine, and therefore, primarily a result of Divine grace, does not override "the proper modality of creatures." Creatures are allowed to respond and form second-order desires which are in accordance with the end of *metamorphosis*. The pattern of Divine activity established here is that of God as the ground of existence and initiator, who at different levels of activity - *creatio continua*, *providentia* and the soteriological action of the Spirit - grants His creatures relative integrity of agency and the freedom to respond to His presence which seeks the *metamorphosis* of the creature. Identity and distinction (differentiation) of creatures is held together alongside relation: dependence on God, interdependence with the rest of creation and the destiny of the Kingdom of God, full communion of the Divine and creation. The identification of a pattern in Divine agency towards the world is consonant with the personal and purposive intentions of the loving God revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. The unity of Divine action pivots, as we saw in Chapter 8, on the Divine covenantal intention to reveal His being in love. This is an intent that binds together God's action in creation and redemption. It also fits the trinitarian dynamic of relationality and

perichoresis, in conjunction with particularity and distinctness. The pattern fits the "Divine Fiat" view less well, and constitutes another reason for rejecting it.

What paradox remains? The answer to this will depend upon how much compatibility of the elements of the dialectic outlined above, between relative autonomy and heteronomy, identity and interdependence, distinctness and communion, can be offered. The Personalist model presented above offers an explanation to some degree. Yet, room for paradox clearly remains. First, there is the paradox that stems from dealing with a transcendent God, the Divine as the ground of existence. As Jenson remarked, we cannot gain a complete vantage point on the Divine-human relationship. Our knowledge is dependent upon what is revealed. As a consequence, the actual "causal joint" of God-world relation, as Austin Farrer termed it, will remain hidden within the probabilistic and lawful structures of nature.[1045] Secondly, there will continue to be a *difference* concerning the intelligibility of personal relations with a non-spatio-temporal being. God is spirit. We cannot simply peel off, within human experience, the divine element from the spatio-temporal wrapping. Our models and metaphors are limited, never banishing the whisper "it is and it is not". This is to be expected given the nature of God and our analogical talk about Him. God's otherness and difference need to be maintained. God's difference is different from all difference that we may imagine.

One last avenue presents itself. In recent years several theologians have called for the reconfiguration of the doctrine of grace, to "transcend the mode of Western theology"[1046]

[1045] Even John Polkinghorne, who initiates a quite aggressive search for the causal joint, concedes: "If it is the unpredictabilities of physical process that indicate the regions where forms of holistic causality can be operating, then all such agency, including divine providence, will be hidden within these cloudy domains. There will be an inextricable entanglement - it will not be possible to itemise occurrences, saying that God did this and nature did that. Faith may discern the divine hand at work, but it will not be possible to isolate and demonstrate that this is so. In this sense, the causal joint is implicit rather than explicit." John Polkinghorne, *Belief in God in an Age of Science* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1998), p.72.

[1046] D. Lyle Dabney, "Nature Dis-Graced and Grace De-Natured," Sc.53. See also, J. Carpenter, *Nature and Grace*; and Kilian McDonnell, "The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit." Stephen Duffy in his conclusion to *The Graced Horizon* holds that two challenges present themselves to the continuing debate: 1.) to widen the anthropomorphic focus so as to embrace the whole order of creation within grace; and, 2.) to apply narrative and process theology to free the debate from its traditional substantialist metaphysics, classical doctrine of God and use of univocal logic. R.R. Reno in *The Ordinary Transformed* redraws the debate in terms of transcendence and immanence, arguing for a mixed or "amphibious" view, which maintains a dialectic of transcendence and immanence without fusion.

in its Augustinian formulation of the debate between grace and nature.[1047] It is interesting to note that these concerns were partially prefigured by John Oman at the beginning of the last century.[1048] In broad brush strokes Lyle Dabney argues that Augustine's formulation of the doctrine of grace had three deleterious elements from which subsequent theology has found it difficult to extract itself: "1) a restricting of the meaning of the term 'nature' to 'human nature', 2) a defining of grace in such a way as to place it in opposition to 'nature' so defined, and 3) a narrowing of the realm of grace to the 'interior' or the 'soul' of the individual."[1049] Like so many other debates in the history of ideas, he considers the doctrine of grace ensnared in its own formulation: "no alternative to the 'dis-gracing of nature and the 'de-naturing' of grace has been found other than a theology of creation which plays down or redefines sin and grace."[1050] The successors of Augustine, both the Scholastics and Reformers, despite attempts to mitigate tensions within their positions, have found "no way ...beyond the dead end of the either/or of continuum and contradiction."[1051]

It might be that these theologians would consider that my thesis also fails to "transcend the mode of Western theology" in its traditional formulation of the doctrine of grace. However, I have parted from the traditional grace-freedom debate in restoring the *hypostasis* of the Spirit to its central role in Christian *metamorphosis* and not relegating the Spirit to an "addendum" or "ornament" to the discussion.[1052] As a result of the restitution of the *hypostasis* of the Spirit to a central position in the discussion, the Divine-human relationship in Christian *metamorphosis* has been conceived in Personalist terms. This avoids the tendency of the traditional language of grace to be interpreted in a "substantialist" metaphysics. Here is a distinction between this thesis and John Oman's *Grace and Personality*, which despite its advocacy of the personal nature of God's "gracious relationship," that of love and not power, still operates primarily out of the language of grace as opposed to personal relations with the Divine *hypostaseis*. His stress

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[1047] Western theology, writes Eugene TeSelle, "both Catholic and Protestant, is largely a series of annotations to [Augustine's] work." E. TeSelle, *Augustine the Theologian* (New York, Herder & Herder, 1970), p.19.
[1048] For example, Oman writes of Augustinianism, "Attention is fixed on grace as a gift merely given, and on works as human resolves merely carried through, with no attention paid to the gracious relation of the Father to His children which does away with all that hard contrast between tasks and gifts." Oman, pp.81. The move here is towards a more Personalist model.
[1049] Dabney, "Nature Dis-Graced and Graced De-Natured," sc. 27.
[1050] ibid., sc. 46.
[1051] ibid., sc. 49.

on the category of morality and the "moral independence" of the person, in combination with his employment of the language of grace, mean that the Personalist model is not fully utilised and extended. At times his accentuation of the moral independence of the creature in appropriating salvation, "all by our own insight and devotion," removes Christian *metamorphosis* from its fundamental relational context.[1053] By utilising a Personalist model, my thesis extends the relational context of Christian *metamorphosis* further. In addition, in the wake of the work of Rahner and others,[1054] it has been maintained that the Divine initiative of love and Self-communication places God's gracious activity as the framework of creation, uniting redemptive history with God's intentions in creating.

Nonetheless, it might appear that my own account has not transcended some of the dualisms and problematic features outlined by Lyle Dabney above. This may especially apply to the issue of the narrowing of grace to the "interior," given the focus on the individual person in the thesis. Lyle Dabney, following on from the work of James Carpenter and Kilian McDonnell, suggests that the way to transcend the impasse of Western theology on grace is to set out a "theology of the world," which articulates "a wholistic vision of the creation and redemption of the world in all its multifaceted being":

> [I]f a theology of the world is a form of theology that takes not just the inner states of the individual, but the historical, the social, the material reality of this world seriously, then grace cannot be categorically denied to nature nor all of nature to grace.[1055]

Quite what is meant by a "theology of the world" beyond the unity of creation and redemption in relation to God's intention of Self-communication, not just to His human creatures, but also as power and presence to the whole of creation, remains unclear. Certainly it may be agreed that the tendency in Western theology to restrict grace to human consciousness at nature's expense, has led to unhelpful consequences. However, it remains unclear how these points actually solve or tackle the underlying generating questions of the grace-nature-freedom debate, or for that matter of my thesis. We are not told how grace,

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[1052] These terms are in McDonnell, "The Determinative Doctrine of the Holy Spirit," pp.142, 161.

[1053] Oman wishes to maintain the strange polarity of, on the one hand, the "absolute independence" of the person in moral judgement, and the "absolute dependence" upon God. Oman, p.57. Certainly one would want to qualify this by saying that creatures possess only *relative* independence.

[1054] On this point S. J. Duffy in his *Graced Horizons* points out many of the similarities between some of these theologians, such as the primacy of grace over nature, and the importance of starting with the actual historical order of grace, rather than the abstract concept of human nature. Whether he sufficiently analyses the differences between these accounts may be questioned.

nature and human freedom cohere.[1056] For sure these points may qualify and re-orientate one's approach to the questions, as they have in this thesis, but they do not in and of themselves answer the questions or render them non-questions. In short, despite the salutary warning to avoid an account of grace restricted to the interior of the person, some account still needs to be given of the relation of the Divine and the individual person in Christian *metamorphosis*. This thesis has attempted to provide such an account.

[1055] Dabney, " Nature Dis-Graced and Graced De-Natured," sc. 53, 41.

[1056] This point is brought out by Stephen Duffy in his review of J.A. Carpenter's book *Nature and Grace* who writes: "We are never told clearly *how* nature and grace, while distinct, are integrated, and thus whether the classical nature-grace problematic is now to be conflated with the problem of general divine concursus or subsumed under divine providence, as in Aquinas." S. Duffy, "Review of Nature and Grace, " *Theological Studies*, Vol. 46 (1989), pp. 580 - 1. As I argued in Chapter 7, it will not do to conflate the issue with general concurrence.

APPENDIX.

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: COMMUNITYAND INDIVIDUAL.

This appendix deals at greater length with a possible objection to the construction of the *generating* question raised in Chapter 1 (Sc. III.02), namely, the focus of the thesis on the *metamorphosis* of the *individual* Christian. To substantiate this objection I shall turn to the work of John D. Zizioulas, from which a case can be made for the priority of the *community* as the object and domain of the operation of the Spirit.

For Zizioulas' trinitarian theology the concept of communion (*koinonia*) is central and communion is, of course, social and plural.[1057] Zizioulas moves from the doctrine of the Trinity to ecclesiology by a consideration of the relation of pneumatology and christology.[1058] The presence of Christ through the Spirit in the Eucharist, that celebratory communal event, constitutes the Church's identity. Christ is not an 'individual', but a divine hypostasis whose very identity is His relation to the Father and the Spirit.[1059] As a result His identity is open to us for us to find true being in communion with him. The Spirit works to realise and preserve that relation:

[1057] Zizioulas' approach is neatly summarised: "The idea of 'communion' functions for Zizioulas as a kind of systematic principle. Like those geometric patterns known as fractals, which repeat themselves at ever smaller levels of detail, the economy of salvation can be described as 'communion' wherever one looks." Review of Mcpartlan's *The Eucharist Makes the Church*, in *Modern Theology* (1995), pp. 475-476.

[1058] Zizioulas rebukes his erstwhile mentor, Vladimir Lossky, whose position is that the Spirit is the agent of the 'personalization' of the mystery of Christ and its appropriation by believers: "Lossky would develop the view that both Christology and Pneumatology are necessary components of ecclesiology, and would see in the sacramental structure of the Church the 'objective' Christological aspect which has to be constantly accompanied by the 'personal' or 'subjective' aspect. The latter is related to freedom and integrity of each person, his inner 'spiritual life', deification etc.." Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p. 125. Paul McPartlan who is well acquainted with the Zizioulas' corpus, makes the following comments about Zizioulas' difficulties with Lossky's position: "Zizioulas thinks that the Person of Christ is an objective provocation to freedom unless Christ is recognised as being *corporate*, such that he is acknowledged *from within*. However, Lossky maintains that our freedom is preserved by means of the indwelling Spirit manifesting to us 'the Deity of the Son' which we can then freely acknowledge. In that Christ still remains a distinct, objective reality here, Zizioulas would not accept that freedom is preserved in Lossky's scheme. ..... Zizioulas implies that the idea of an 'economy of the Spirit' is an overreaction to the view of the Spirit as just a 'satellite' of the 'self-defined' Christ-event and he adds that it makes it hard to understand 'the biblical assertion that the Church is the Body of Christ, and not of the Spirit'. ..... The Spirit's one unchanging activity has been, we may say, first, to make Christ the Church and now to make the Church Christ." P. G. McPartlan, SJ., *The Eucharist Makes the Church: Henri de Lubac and John Zizioulas in Dialogue* (Edinburgh: T&T. Clark, 1993), pp. 225-6.

[1059] This draws on the traditional Orthodox distinction, also found in the work of Martin Buber, between 'individualism,' which is atomistic and exclusionary, and 'personhood,' whose source is the Divine Father and hence a state of Divine relation. It may also be related to Zizioulas' distinction between the "ecclesiological" and "biological" *hypostasis*. Individualism realises only the "biological" *hypostasis*. For Zizioulas the word 'individual' is a black term, standing for the Western intellectual tradition's faulty anthropology, inspired by a mistaken doctrine of God and its affair with the Cartesian and Enlightenment enterprise. When I use the term in this thesis I do not wish it to bear such connotations. It is, in fact, quite a useful word in referring to the single human.

> The Holy Spirit, in making real the Christ-event in history, makes real *at the same time* Christ's personal existence as a body or community. Christ does not exist *first* as truth and *then* as communion..... All separation between Christology and ecclesiology vanishes in the Spirit.[1060]

Zizioulas' emphasis on the social, leads him to talk of the 'corporate personality' of Christ. Christ is essentially plural and relational, possessing His life only as He receives it from others.[1061] Christ is constituted by the Spirit, and through the Spirit, by the Church. In a real sense Christ *is* the Church, or rather the Church in its future form as the fellowship of the saints in heaven.[1062] Thus, the indwelling of the Spirit is to be identified with the corporate Christian sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist.

This is all as background to what Zizioulas specifically says about the Spirit's indwelling.[1063] The Holy Spirit brings about *koinonia* (II Cor.13.13). Thus, in his article "Communion and Otherness", Zizioulas writes:

> When the Holy Spirit blows, He does not create good individual Christians, individual 'saints', but an event of communion, which transforms everything the Spirit touches in to a *relational being*. The other becomes in this case an ontological part of one's identity. The Spirit de-individualizes and personalizes beings wherever He operates.[1064]

This seems to be a point about the Spirit's function as communion-creator. It does not state, nor necessarily entail the proposition that concerns me, viz. the Spirit only indwells the community *not* the individual. The import of Zizioulas' position comes out slightly more strongly in his article, "The Early Christian Community":

> Christian spirituality, therefore, could not be experienced outside the community, which involved a multiplicity and variety of spiritual charisms. .....Individualism is incompatible with Christian spirituality. *None can possess the Spirit as an individual, but only as a member of the community.*

[1060] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p.111.

[1061] The concept of "corporate personhood" is in part derived by Zizioulas from Maximus the Confessor.

[1062] Zizioulas' concept of the corporate Christ should not go unquestioned. Andrew Louth in his review of McPartlan's *The Eucharist Makes the Church*, is concerned that Zizioulas' case for adopting the language of 'corporate personality', rests too heavily on an outdated understanding of the Biblical use of the term 'Son of Man': "The notion 'corporate personality' is not as such biblical, rather it is characteristic of a phase of 'biblical theology' - a very different matter." A. Louth, "Review," *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. 46 (1995), p. 425.

[1063] It is difficult to find more than a paragraph, here and there, in Zizioulas' work that addresses this issue.

[1064] J. Zizioulas, "Communion and Otherness," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 38 (1994), p. 354. Elsewhere Zizioulas says something very similar: "The Spirit is the Spirit of 'communion' and his primary work consists in opening up reality to become *relational*. The Spirit is incompatible with individualism. ..... There is no 'one' whose identity is not conditioned by the 'many'." J.D. Zizioulas, "The Mystery of the Church in Orthodox Tradition," *One in Christ* Vol. 24 (1988), p.299.

> When the Spirit blows the result is never to create good individual Christians but members of a community.[1065]

McPartlan's interpretation of Zizioulas supports the argument that the Spirit indwells the community and not the individual:

> As the local community in the Eucharist is the Body of Christ, so also it, strictly, is the Temple of the Spirit. As Zizioulas interprets such texts as Paul's statement that the mystery is 'Christ in you' to mean 'you' not as many individuals but as a single corporate unit, such that the mystery is Christ *as a community*, so also he maintains that, although it is commonly assumed to do so, the New Testament never refers to Christians as temples of the Spirit, in the plural. Rather, it is local communities which the epistles address and acknowledge, each as a temple of the Spirit.[1066]

McPartlan makes Zizioulas' position more robust, and I shall adopt this Zizioulas-inspired position as the thesis to be examined.[1067] Scripture informs us that the Spirit is given to the *community* in Acts 2, and that the singular form ('temple,' 'building,' ...) is used in many Pauline texts.[1068] I will take this to be the argument for the position that the Spirit indwells the community not the individual.

In his article "The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life", Albert Winn poses the following questions:

> Is the primary work of the Holy Spirit to initiate, sustain, renew, and shape the lives of individual believers, so that the bestowal of shared life on the community is a happy by-product? Or is the primary work of the Holy Spirit to initiate, sustain, renew, and shape the shared life of the community, so that the bestowal of life on individual believers is instrumental to that end?[1069]

[1065] J.D. Zizioulas, "The Early Christian Community," in *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelfth Century*, eds. by B. McGinn and J. Meyendorff (New York: Crossroad, 1985), p. 27. The *italics* are mine.

[1066] McPartlan, pp. 278-9.

[1067] Albert Winn argues that the Western tradition has tended to emphasise the *noetic* work of the Holy Spirit upon the individual, rather than the life-bestowing role of creator of communion. He cites John Calvin as one among many who have exemplified this tendency. According to Calvin we know the Bible to be the Word of God by inward witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. The Holy Spirit as the *interior magister*, the inward teacher who alone enables us to understand Scripture by opening our blind eyes and unstopping our deaf ears (*The Christian Institutes* II, ii, 20; III, i, 4; III, ii, 34). Yet, Calvin is aware of the life giving aspect of the Spirit in his section of the *Institutes* "The Life of the Christian Man" (III, vi-x). But Winn argues that: "What is lacking is any clear teaching that the Holy Spirit is the author of *koinona*, that the life he bestows is the shared life, that 'the life of the Christian man' is instrumental to the life of the Christian community. Calvin has a high doctrine of the Church, but he does not link it directly with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It is not for him a part of the third article, but rather the principal subject of Book Four!" A. Winn, "The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life," *Interpretation*, Vol. 33 (1979), p. 52

[1068] For example, I Cor. 3.16-17; I Corinthians 3.9; II Cor. 6:16; Eph.2.21-22.

[1069] Winn, p.50.

I do not wish to dispute that the priority for the Christian life is the second alternative. Christians are called to the shared life of the Christian community, to true *koinonia*, which, as Zizioulas points out has an important eschatological focus. Winn goes on to defend this position:

> If the bestowal of life on individuals. were primary, would ancient Israel have expressed such longing for a totally shared life in the Spirit? If the new birth and resurrection of individuals were the main thing, would Paul have argued so constantly from 'the common good' (I Cor.12.7) and 'the building up of the church'(I Cor. 14.3,4,5,12,26)? The whole biblical drama moves, not toward the salvation of unrelated individuals, like beads in a box, but toward the Kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem, where the dwelling of G is with his redeemed people (Rev. 21.3). The salvation of individuals is instrumental to this. And the role of the Holy Spirit in the drama is to bestow *koinonia*, the shared life, on the people of God. The bestowal of new life on individuals is instrumental to that.[1070]

The real point of dispute relates to Zizioulas' statement that, *None can possess the Spirit as an individual, but only as a member of the community*. This statement seems to be perfectly compatible with the indwelling of the Spirit at the individual level, as long as that individual is part of the Christian community. It is then McPartlan's interpretation of Zizioulas' position that the Spirit indwells the community as a 'corporate unit' which is the bone of contention.

What does it mean for the Spirit to indwell the Christian community purely on the level of the corporate unit? Both Zizioulas and McPartlan believe that the Church is constituted when the Eucharist is celebrated.[1071] In the Eucharist the identity of the local Christian community with the heavenly Church of Christ surrounded by the saints is realised. This is the paradigm example of a corporate event, enabled by the Holy Spirit indwelling the Christian community as a corporate unit. Yet, are we not in danger by excluding the definition of the community as a collection of individuals as McPartlan does, of losing the connection with individual lives and of turning the Christian life into an abstraction? Is this talk of 'corporate personality' and 'corporate unit' in danger of reifying the collective abstract, rather like attempts to reify the nation/society? I experience the Holy Communion as an individual, "The body of Christ keep *you* in eternal life - Amen," but at the same

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[1070] ibid., pp.50-1. Israel's longing for a corporate bestowal of the life of the Spirit on the people of God is testified to in Numbers 11.29; Isa. 44.3, cf. 28.5, 32.15, 59.21.

[1071] One may ask what Zizioulas would make of churches which do not celebrate the Eucharist, such as the Salvation Army? Are they denied the indwelling of the Spirit?

time as an individual who is part of a community and seeking communion, "Though we are many, we are one body, because we all share in one bread." In John's Gospel the Spirit has the role of "helper", "counsellor/teacher", and "comforter"(John 14.16-18). To assume that this teaching and counselling is only at the level of the corporate life seems unnecessarily prohibitive.

The Zizioulas-inspired position unnecessarily subordinates the indwelling of the Spirit to the category of the community. In doing so it seems to set up a false either/or: the community versus the individual. In contrast, the scriptural witness shows that when the Spirit bestows life and power it does so to both individuals and the community to which they belong. The two are not set-up in contradistinction. Examples of the work of the Spirit in relation to the individual are the Spirit's bestowal of power on Jesus (Lk 4.14 cf. 4.16-19), Peter (Acts 4.8), Stephen (6.10), Philip (8.39), Saul (9.17), Barnabas (11.24). As Albert Winn remarks:

> When the life given by the Holy Spirit is described as birth (Jn 3.5) or resurrection (Rom 8.11), we are speaking of what individuals experience. The varied gifts of the Spirit are given to individuals (1Cor.12.7; Rom.12.6; Ephes 4.11; 1Pet. 4.10).[1072]

Jesus' exhortation of Nicodemus is a *personal* challenge. Paul contrasts the reality that "you are in the Spirit" with the alternative, which seems to refer to the individual: "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him"(Rom.8.9). In his epistles Paul addresses a community, in an open letter, so the "you" does refer to the communal "you." To suppose that this fact, in and of itself, rules out the application of the pronoun to the individual, or that it cannot refer to a collection of individuals, seems an unnecessarily restrictive reading. In II Corinthians Paul talks of God's anointing, "by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts." The Spirit is linked to the heart (*kardia*), the seat of a person's reason, emotions and will. Or again, in Ephesians the Spirit is linked with the strength of the believer's 'inner being' (Eph.3.16).[1073] This all suggests that the Spirit's interaction with a person's motivational and noetic structures, is an important element of the activity of the Spirit. In Galatians Paul talks about living by and walking with the Spirit. This involves the experience of inner conflict, a battle between the Spirit and one's

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[1072] ibid., 49.

former 'unspiritual' self.[1074] In Acts 2 the spectacular coming of the Spirit upon the disciples is followed by Peter's address to the Jews, which is a personal challenge, which follows the call of John the Baptist and Jesus of repentance, "and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"(Acts 2.38).

Zizioulas' expositor, McPartlan, concedes that I Corinthians 6.19 is an exception to the rule that the term 'temple' refers to the community, for it is used in this instance in the plural not the singular and seems to refer clearly to individual indwelling.[1075] Paul is happy both with the view that the Church is the Spirit's home (I Cor. 3.16-17), while at the same time realising that the Church is composed of individuals and that the Spirit's role is to enable such individuals to live as productive members of the Christian community. Thus he can move in the same chapter from references to the Spirit's indwelling which are singular and communal, to allusion which are plural and individual. For my purposes all that I have to show is that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is an individual, personal reality as well as a communal one, and I hope I have shown that there is a scriptural case for saying this.

The position that the Spirit only indwells the community, seems to entail the proposition that the community is a necessary and sufficient condition for the indwelling of the Spirit. It seems conceivable that someone might be an active member of a Christian community, but does not show *any* of the fruits of the Spirit, his actions are contrary to the faith in Christ which is publicly confessed. Does such a person partake of the indwelling of the Spirit as a corporate unit? It is also conceivable that a local Christian community might confess their faith, celebrate the sacraments of the Church, yet display none of the fruits of the Spirit and again act in such a way that it is the polar opposite to life in the Spirit. Is its outward identity as a Christian community a necessary and sufficient condition for the indwelling of the Spirit? It might be necessary to draw a distinction between the institution and the event. The institution may be no guarantee of spiritual blessings, but the events of the Christian life constituted by the Spirit are the true source of the indwelling of the Spirit.

[1073] Note that this passage makes another reference to the indwelling of the heart. Paul uses the second person pronoun, but *kardia* is notably in the plural.
[1074] Gal.5.16-21; Rom.7.14- 8:9.
[1075] McPartlan 1993, p.279n.84.

Finally, what about a person who is expelled from their church on unsatisfactory grounds, like Peter Abelard, who spent some time not in communion with a Christian community. Is the indwelling of the Spirit absent from their lives? Or take the case of someone who is not a member of a local church, although she displays some of the fruits of the Spirit and her actions are a witness to her faith. Is the Spirit absent again? All these cases suggest that much more work needs to be done by Zizioulas and others to give an ecclesiological explanation of the status of such persons. Membership of the Christian community need not be a necessary or sufficient condition of the Spirit's indwelling, however, movement into the Christian community must be the hope and will be the future. That is the Spirit's eschatological role.

Zizioulas and McPartlan do not connect their understanding of the Spirit's role in the Church, with the Spirit's operation within creation. Philip Rosato examines the Spirit's activity as teacher, unifier, liberator, and vivifier, and in all areas argues that Christians should pray for and be open to the possibility of the Spirit acting in these terms beyond the Church.[1076] Not to do so would not only be to betray the power and sovereignty of God, but also to neglect the way in which events outside the Church can help to re-vitalise and nourish the Christian community.[1077] Relating the operation of the Spirit in creation with the Spirit's role in the Church offers the potential of cross-fertilisation. The Church should not simply conform to the world, but it may be able to learn of the Divine will through the world. It is clear from Scripture that the Spirit operates outside the Christian community: in the conservation of all creation (Psalm 24, 104), the pagan prophet Balaam prophesying under the influence of God (Num.22-24), and the gentile Cornelius receiving Divine revelation (Acts 10:1-8).[1078] Certainly it would seem inconceivable that anybody outside of the Christian community could be drawn into and converted to the Christian faith were it not for the activity of the Spirit *extra-ecclesia*. The activity of the Spirit *extra-ecclesia*, may not be strictly *identical* to the indwelling of the Spirit in the believer and the

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[1076] Philip J. Rosato, SJ., "The Mission of the Spirit Within and Beyond the Church," *Ecumenical Review* Vol. 41 (1989), pp 388 - 397.

[1077] For Rosato, "the undeniable praise bestowed by Jesus on those who were not 'believers' but did the will of the Father (Mtt 21:28-31), and in the unexpected presence of the Holy Spirit in those who had not yet been baptized (Acts 10:48)," means that "the church must leave aside any attempt to pronounce a final judgement on the work for solidarity and peace undertaken by those who verbally, if not actually, deny the transcendent source of fraternal love." Rosato, p.392.

community. Some sort of qualitative, as opposed to quantative, distinction needs to be drawn. In John's Gospel indwelling is described as an intimate relationship which allows for teaching, counselling and comforting.[1079] Thus, indwelling of the Spirit which is accompanied by explicit and true faith of the believer, allows for a much deeper and richer relationship. It would be perfectly consistent for Zizioulas/McPartlan to draw this distinction too.

In conclusion, the indwelling of the Spirit within the Christian community is not incompatible with the indwelling of the Spirit within an individual Christian, or the activity of the Spirit outside of the Christian community altogether. What I have called the 'two levels,' of the community and the individual, are mutually complementary and integral. All the Spirit's actions are directed towards building up Christ's Body, the Church, but in doing so the Spirit enables, renews the individual, both at a motivational level and at a noetic one. In this way the person is drawn into fully sharing the *koinonia* of the Christian community. Given that one of the goals of the Christian life is "the communion of the Holy Spirit"(II Cor.13:13), Zizioulas is quite right to say that it is incompatible with individualism, as a dogma. This is no reason, though, to forsake the category of the individual.

[1078] "The wind (pneuma) blows where it chooses"(John.3:8).

[1079] Note that in the Old Testament God's presence is described in a multitude of ways: in a sanctuary (Gen.12:6,7); the 'face' (Exodus 33.14); the Ark (Num.10:35f); the cloud (Num.10:33); the glory (*kabod*, Ezek.1:28); the *shekinah*.

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